

# Balmoral Hall

# 1901-2001



*An Exceptional School Celebrates  
Its **First Century***

*Murray Peterson*



***Balmoral Hall***

***1901-2001***

***An Exceptional***

***School***

***Celebrates Its***

***First Century***

***Murray Peterson***

**PUBLISHED BY:**

Balmoral Hall School For Girls  
Winnipeg, MB

**DATE OF PUBLICATION:**

April 2002

**ISBN:**

0-9730952-0-2

**AUTHOR:**

Murray Peterson (1961- )

**DESIGNED & PRINTED BY:**

Winnipeg Sun -  
Commercial Printing Divison  
1700 Church Avenue  
Winnipeg, MB  
Canada R2X 3A2  
(204-632-2785)



## **PREFACE**

The book you hold in your hands is a celebration! It seeks to describe the formation, evolution and triumph of Balmoral Hall School for Girls as it celebrates its 100th anniversary. A history such as this often walks a fine line — which stories should find their way onto its pages and which should not. Every student's experience is unique; all have had their share of tears, of success, of heartbreak and many memories.

This book concentrates on the brighter moments and the many achievements of the students. It offers a brief glimpse of school life throughout the decades as three founding schools struggled with their own unique circumstances, came together and ultimately flourished as Balmoral Hall. It is a success story in the truest sense.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I wish to thank the students of Mrs. Friesen's Senior 3 class of 2000-2001 and the alumnae they interviewed. Their enthusiasm for the school's history, the stories that came out of the interviews and the momentum generated from the project spurred us on to the creation of this history book.

Space did not allow for a more complete description of the history and activities of the various parent and alumnae associations affiliated with all the schools. Their constant support and tireless efforts on behalf of the students, staff and school, along with and the members of the Boards of Directors, are in no small way responsible for the success of Balmoral Hall.

Thanks as well to Claire Sumerlus, Head of School, who has been a constant source of encouragement; to Tina Alto, Director of Development & Marketing at Balmoral Hall, who has been the brains and energy behind the book; to teachers Teresa Friesen, Lois Robinson and Jennifer McDonald for all their help; and to Geneviève Delaquis in the Alumnae Office for her constant support. A special thanks to Lyn Stephen, school archivist extraordinaire. Her patience, expertise and humour have added immeasurably to this book and I (and the school) owe her a huge debt of gratitude.

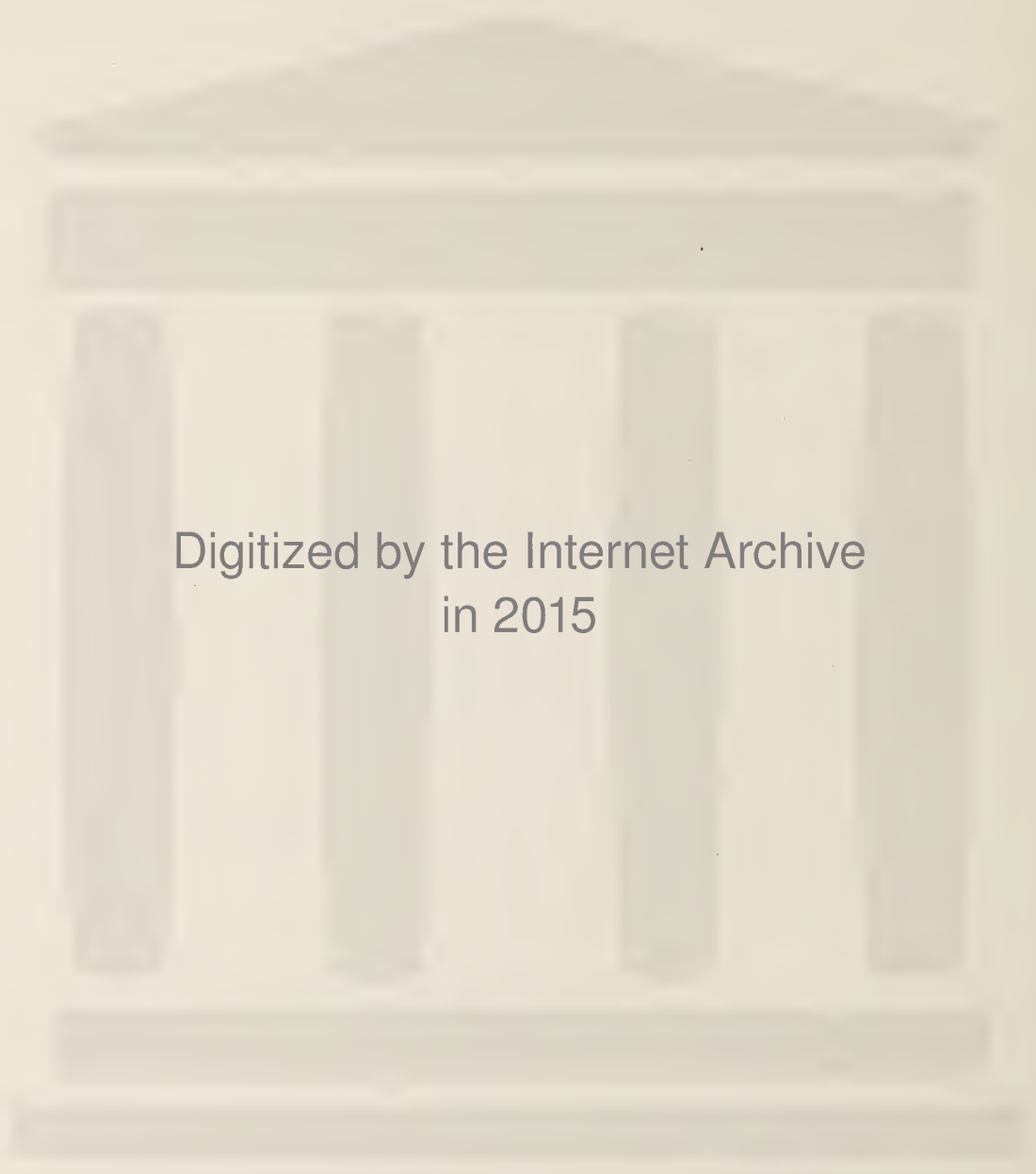
Lastly, I would like to thank the women who have guided me at various times along my chosen path: Willard, Margaret, Evelyn, Maryann, Sandy, Ellen and Beth.

M.P.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

BALMORAL HALL, 2001 .....	1
WINNIPEG, 1901.....	4
SCHOOLS .....	6
HAVERGAL COLLEGE.....	9
RUPERT'S LAND LADIES' COLLEGE .....	20
FATHER AND SON – THE DREAMER AND THE DOER & THE FOUNDING OF RIVERBEND SCHOOL .....	25
THE OPENING OF RIVERBEND SCHOOL.....	31
RUPERT'S LAND LADIES' COLLEGE, 1930-1950.....	35
RIVERBEND SCHOOL, 1929-1950 .....	40
THE FOUNDING OF BALMORAL HALL SCHOOL FOR GIRLS.....	51
THE EVOLUTION OF BALMORAL HALL SCHOOL .....	55
UNIFORMS.....	63
THE MODERN BALMORAL HALL SCHOOL .....	67
THE NEW MILLENNIUM AND BEYOND.....	78
ALUMNAE MEMORIES .....	82



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2015

<https://archive.org/details/balmoralhall19012001balm>



# BALMORAL HALL, 2001

Balmoral Hall School today educates over 500 students from Kindergarten to Grade XII (Senior 4). Students take advantage of many modern and state-of-the-art facilities including a 202-seat theatre, an athletic centre, science laboratories, a 14,000-book library, computer labs and a multi-media technology resource centre. It is home to dozens of residential students from across North America and around the world. The school is celebrating its centennial in 2001 and 2002 with class projects, presentations, and many festivities!

This celebration offers its students, staff, administration, parents and alumnae a unique opportunity to look back and, perhaps more importantly, to note how far the school has come as an institution, to realize how fortunate they are and to look ahead with anticipation to the next century.

The activities surrounding this centennial have been as varied as the students. A group of thirteen Senior 3 (Grade XI) students from two classes opted to participate in an oral history project by interviewing graduates from every decade from the 1930s to the 1970s and the three schools: Rupert's Land, Riverbend and Balmoral Hall. The students heard stories of triumph, tragedy and humour. They

were given glimpses of the ordinary, day-to-day life at school, gaining a much more extensive understanding of how the school has developed over time. They also came to see the need to support the school's continuing evolution, both as students and as alumnae.

One of the many highlights of the project came when a particularly gripping story was being told. The students behind the camera were so engrossed that they finally began asking their own questions to clarify and better understand the alumna's story.

Another exciting event was the musical production, "If They Could See Me Now," which showcased the talents of 350 performers ages 4 to 18. The original production told the story of Gwendolyn (the character was named for Headmistress Gwendolyn Murrell-Wright) a young girl facing the uncertainty and challenges of life after graduation. Performances were held in late January and early February 2002 at the athletic centre and were extremely well received.

Other projects have also been completed, including a virtual tour of Aikins House and a multi-media presentation describing the evolution of the school uniform at the three schools. Throughout the 2001-



*Senior 3 a.m. class, 2001 (left to right): Ashley Long, Kerry Kruger, M. Peterson, Elisabeth Leitgeb, Amanda Aldous, Marcie Hawranik (below), Mhelanni Gorre and Amanda Salaam*



*Senior 3 p.m. class, 2001 (left to right): Top row — Lesley Robertson, Sophie Reeves, Valerie Vanbiervliet, M. Peterson, Bottom row — Carissa Nikkel, Amber Bewza, Melanie Hnatyshyn*

2002 school year, each individual grade is being assigned a decade and asked to present an assembly for the school, “celebrating” their time period. A centennial CD was made which featured the five Balmoral Hall Choirs performing 37 selections. The centennial festivities will also include an Alumnae Reunion in May 2002.

Teresa Friesen, who has taught at the school for nearly 30 years, has witnessed many changes in the school but believes the biggest change has been in the students themselves. They are a much more diverse group than when she first started — from all over the city, country and globe and from many

different backgrounds and cultures. She is also proud of the self-assured graduates who have left Balmoral Hall, watching as quiet, reserved junior school students have grown and matured into confident young women.<sup>1</sup> This, she believes, is the real value of the type of education available at Balmoral Hall.

It is an exciting time at Balmoral Hall, there is much to be thankful for and much to celebrate. And now we trace the development of Balmoral Hall School, beginning at the turn of the century, as Winnipeg begins its rise in stature on both the national and international scene...



*Above: Student at computer, Balmoral Hall Archives (below as BHA)*

*Left: Senior Common Room with “Friendship Window”, donated by the Class of 1969 in 1992, BHA*





*Above Left: Computer Lab, BHA*



*Above Right: Bedroom in Residence, BHA*

*Right: Library, BHA*

*Below: Weight room, BHA*



# WINNIPEG, 1901

According to the Census of Canada, 1901, Winnipeg's population rose from just under 8,000 in 1881 to 42,340 by 1901, a steady though unspectacular rise for Western Canada's chief urban centre. The city, incorporated by Provincial legislation passed on November 8, 1873, was a collection of frame buildings, and a few solid brick structures, huddled near the old fur trading post. It had few of the trappings of the more established eastern centres — sidewalks were few and far between, accommodations were often crude and the dirt roads proved impassible whenever it rained.

*"And then the roads we had to drive along defy description. The inches (no other word) of mud, and the holes which nearly capsize one at every turn."*

Mrs. Cecil Hall, describing her arrival in Winnipeg in 1871 in A Lady's Life On A Farm In Manitoba (London: W.H. Allen, 1884), p. 25

*"To me, Winnipeg was an adventure. Everything was new, therefore interesting, the highways were mud roads, the drainage ditches on either side of narrow wood sidewalks. When I came (1879) I knew less than a dozen people, but I concluded there was ample room to grow and expand with the country. You can readily see the enormous changes that have taken place in Manitoba since the early days of '79 and '80s."*

Excerpt from Sir James Aikins' speech on the celebration of the 50th anniversary of his call to the Bar, Winnipeg, February 25, 1929 in Winnipeg Tribune, February 26, 1929, p. 18





Winnipeg changed significantly due to three major factors: the Canadian Pacific Railway (C.P.R.), immigration and freight rates. The coming of the C.P.R. in the early 1880s meant citizens and businesses had a permanent, reliable, year round transportation link replacing the canoe, Red River cart and steamboat. Dominion government policies of the late 1890s populated the West by aggressively recruiting immigrant families to take up farming on the prairies thereby expanding agriculture, especially the production of wheat, throughout the region. The final piece of the puzzle was the negotiation for preferential freight rates which made it cheaper for Eastern Canadian firms to ship their goods to

Winnipeg, store them and then have them shipped to Western retailers than to ship them directly.

Winnipeg, in 1901, was poised to take full advantage of its location between the producers and the consumers, its preferential freight rates, its role as the premier prairie city, and the opening of the West to immigrant farmers and their families. It certainly took full advantage. It became the fastest growing urban centre in the world prior to World War I and all facets of its society grew at the same dizzying pace - banks, commodity exchanges, office towers, movie theatres, churches, curling rinks, streetcars, bridges, apartment blocks and schools.



*Looking west down Broadway, ca. 1905, PAM*

# SCHOOLS

Education, of course, had always been an important part of Winnipeg society, beginning with the first permanent European settlement in the 1810s.

Selkirk Settlers expressed the need for organized education shortly after their arrival. Hudson's Bay Company Governor Miles MacDonell made reference to the schoolmaster and his school in a letter dated January 24, 1813.<sup>2</sup> Two years later, MacDonell had hired John Matheson, Jr. to be the settlement's full-time schoolmaster, teaching the children in an old building that stood on the site of present-day St. John's Park on North Main Street. Unfortunately for the children and their teacher, the settlement was embroiled in a battle between the Hudson's Bay Company and its chief rival, the North West Company; the latter burned the school, homes and crops to the ground.<sup>3</sup>

Lord Selkirk meanwhile, had made a plea to the

Roman Catholic Church in Quebec to send priests to encourage the transient francophone population of the region, the Métis, to adopt a more sedentary way of life.<sup>4</sup> In response, a school was organized in 1818 on the east side of the Red River in what would come to be known as St. Boniface.<sup>5</sup>

In 1827, Anne Cockran, wife of Rev. William Cockran, began what was Western Canada's first girls' school, organized to educate the daughters of the fur traders (mixed blood children) on "how to be good housewives."<sup>6</sup> Two years later, Mary Jones, wife of Rev. David T. Jones was running the facility. But many fur trade officers wanted more for their daughters than this 'basic' education. They wanted their daughters to receive a refined, British education<sup>7</sup> and in November 1834, Rev. Jones and his wife opened the Red River Academy, a fine stone building providing day school for approximately 40 boys and



*Red River Academy, 1852, Provincial Archives of Manitoba, (below as PAM), N7237*





*St. John's Ladies' College, Redwood Avenue, 1900 reproduced from W.H. Carre, Art Work on Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, Part 8, p. 4*

girls.<sup>8</sup> While attendance during its early years was not a problem, finding suitable governesses from Britain to teach the female pupils became increasingly difficult.<sup>9</sup> The school struggled on after Mary Jones' death in 1836 and Rev. Jones' return to England the following year. The school was eventually purchased from the Hudson's Bay Company by Rev. John Macallum, the harsh boys' teacher, who ran the institution until his death from jaundice on October 1, 1849.<sup>10</sup>

Across the river, the most important event in the history of education in St. Boniface occurred in 1844 with the June arrival of four Grey Nuns from

Montreal. In less than a month they were teaching 27 girls in their house and shortly thereafter, 44 boys. The construction of their new convent (present-day St. Boniface Museum, Tache Avenue), completed in 1846, meant the settlement had a permanent school.<sup>11</sup>

The 1849 death of John Macallum and the subsequent sale of the Red River Academy to Anglican Bishop David Anderson spelt the end of the girls' school and the conversion of the boys' school into a seminary. To fill the void, Mrs. Mills and her two daughters began a new girls' school in 1851. Operating until 1857, it would then be two decades before a new Anglican girls' school would appear in the area.<sup>12</sup>

It was obvious by the late 1860s that the community around Upper Fort Garry was in need of many modern services, especially in education. New 'urban' congregations were forming, including Holy Trinity and Christ Church Anglican and Grace Methodist that were considering small schools as part of their modest church buildings.<sup>13</sup> The Catholics too were looking at establishing themselves on the west side of the Red River. On May 1, 1869, two nuns opened St. Mary's School in rented premises in half of a duplexed house near present-day Portage and Main. The entire building was subsequently purchased by Bishop Taché for use by the sisters, and the first mass was held on June 15, 1869 — the beginnings of St. Mary's Academy.<sup>14</sup>

A significant milestone in the education of Manitoba's female students was the opening of the new St. John's Ladies' College at the foot of Redwood Avenue on the Red River in 1877.<sup>15</sup> It sat on a 4-acre piece of property and opened with Miss Hart-Davies as its principal.<sup>16</sup>

There was much celebration when it opened but this, unfortunately, was short-lived. Because of a

lack of sewers in the area, the school had to use ‘outdoor facilities.’ The exterior foundation remained solid but the interior partitions began to settle unevenly almost as soon as the building was occupied.<sup>17</sup> The resulting sagging of floors and cracking of walls and ceilings gave the new building a dilapidated quality. Its proximity to the river also resulted in the frequent flooding of its basement.

While all these problems could have been

overcome, it was the lack of students that was the real issue. As one observer noted just before its demolition, the institution “was never a success as a school, probably owing to the lack of desirable pupils, as families who could afford to educate their daughters at a collegiate school were few and far between at that time in Winnipeg, and more scarce still in the province.”<sup>18</sup> Although it struggled on into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it finally closed.<sup>19</sup>



# HAVERGAL COLLEGE

With the growth of Winnipeg in the late 1890s, area Anglicans realized that they needed a modern, sizable presence in the capital city. St. John's Ladies' College had not garnered the support the board had hoped for, partly, it would seem, because of its isolated location and because of problems with the actual building. The Catholics had opened St. Mary's Academy nearly two decades earlier and it had been very successful, despite problems with its location.

And so it was at the turn of the century that a group of concerned Anglicans, along with members of local Presbyterian congregations, began the search for a new school for their daughters. For assistance in this undertaking, the group looked east, consulting frequently with the Board at Havergal College in Toronto. The Ontario Evangelical Anglicans had founded the school in 1894 and a large number of its early boarders came

from Winnipeg. By late 1898, the school's reputation matched its magnificent new school building in downtown Toronto.<sup>20</sup> The Winnipeg group, armed with their knowledge of the workings of a top-notch girls' school, then began to look for a suitable home.



*Above: Havergal College staff and students on veranda of a house in the neighbourhood, ca.1904, BHA*



HAVERGAL COLLEGE.

*Line drawing of the newly opened Havergal College, Winnipeg, 1902, BHA*





*Kindergarten class at Havergal College, no date, BHA*



*Class at Havergal College, ca.1902, PAM, N3367*

In the end, they chose to locate their prestigious school in the heart of the city's then-most prestigious residential districts, the Hudson's Bay Reserve.

The building chosen by the group, Austin House, was located on the west side of Carlton Street, just north of Broadway. The 2½-storey, brick veneer structure (number 122) was built in 1882 for the then-princely sum of \$20,000.<sup>21</sup> The building had the distinction, along with the house next to it, of being the first in Winnipeg to boast steam heat.<sup>22</sup> It was built for Albert William Austin (1858-1934) an entrepreneur who brought streetcars to Winnipeg. Austin lived in the house for only a short time, moving back to Toronto in 1892.<sup>23</sup>

With the property purchased, the group then began a search for two important pieces of the puzzle: the

*The aim of the school is the development of character, and I feel that this can be accomplished only by considering the girls individually, not in the mass. We try in the first four Forms [Grades I to IV] to give what old-fashioned educators called "a thorough grounding," and in the three highest Forms to make the time-table [sic] of studies and sports very elastic. I think there are probably not two girls above Fourth Form who follow exactly the same routine. Those girls, the bulk of whose work is Music and Literature, are separated from the girls who are working for examinations, and their time-tables [sic] are thought out individually with special reference to the peculiar tastes, talents and circumstances of each one.*

*The numbers in the junior classes [have been] kept small, so that each child can receive individual attention. Further up in the school, fairly large classes are desirable, as numbers increase competition and help methodical discipline.*

Principal Dalton, in her 1902 Report, in Havergal College, Winnipeg, 1902, pp. 14-17, BHA

school's name and a headmistress. As it turned out, they were able to obtain both from the same place. They were granted permission to use the name Havergal, in recognition of the special bond already forged between the two schools, and the fact that the

*Gymnastics are always regarded as an important part of a boy's training, but surely it is just as necessary for a girl, and I like gymnastics to be taken by every girl in the school.*

Principal Dalton, in her 1902 Report, in Havergal College, Winnipeg, 1902, p. 17, BHA

first headmistress<sup>24</sup> of Winnipeg's Havergal, Miss Martha Jane Dalton (1868-1955), was the former vice-principal of Toronto's Havergal.<sup>25</sup>

Miss Dalton set about the onerous task of hiring staff and organizing the facility. All seemed fairly well in-hand; Miss Dalton even had her Irish cook Bridget with her. Miss Dalton, many years later, remembered how there was no electricity or furniture her first night at the new school. Three days prior to opening, however, nearly 80 additional girls registered. As a result of these latecomers, extra staff was hired and a terrace on Edmonton Street was rented for use as temporary accommodations. The original staff included Miss Grime (resident), Miss Sampson (resident), Miss Crampton (Music Mistress), Miss Codd, Miss Livingston, Miss Agnes



*Lady with the lamp in Prospectus, no date, BHA*

Dalton (House Mistress), Madame Moreau de Bauvière (French professor at St. John's College, Winnipeg), Miss Marie Fortin and several visiting music and art instructors. Due to space limitations, pianos were put "in all odd corners" making practicing difficult. Originally, the office of the headmistress was located in the home's former pantry, the cloakroom and gymnasium were found in



*Miss Dalton, no date, in "The Eagle," Vol. III (June 1931), BHA*

*Miss M.J. Dalton was born in 1868 and received her higher education at Westfield College, London University where she was an English and Science specialist. After leaving Havergal, she took a pleasure trip to Japan where she was asked to remain and organize a Girls' College. She returned to England at the outbreak of World War I and volunteered as a nurse. After the War she travelled to Syria to administer supplies and provide supervision for the British efforts among the Armenian refugees. She died in Vancouver, British Columbia on August 9, 1955.*

Scrapbook and Rupert's Land Alumnae Association Bulletin, June 1931 in Rupert's Land College Magazine, Vol. III, No. 1 (June 1931), p. 66, BHA



the basement.<sup>26</sup>

To many of its former students, one of the fondest memories of Havergal is the “Lady with the Lamp,” a bronze statue holding an ornamental electric globe standing on the ground floor newel post of the main staircase of the old house. Unfortunately, the lady went missing in the 1950s and has never been recovered.

While the actual school year was beginning at Havergal, a group of Winnipeg businessmen was assuring that the school was financially stable. It prepared documents to incorporate “Havergal Ladies College, Winnipeg” with capital stock of \$50,000 divided into 1,000 shares of \$50 each. While a group of citizens put up large amounts of capital to ensure the College’s future, they also looked after the school in other ways. E.L. Drewry, for example, would send a portion of his fall duck hunt to the school as a treat for the boarders and staff.<sup>27</sup>

And so Havergal Ladies’ College began. Early classes included Swedish drilling, sewing, German, Greek, singing and cooking, along with regular academic subjects. French, even in the early years, was emphasized at the school. Sunday services for staff and students were observed at Holy Trinity Anglican, Westminster Presbyterian or St. Stephen’s Presbyterian. Long lines of Havergal students, “walking in a crocodile,” would trek to church or participate in daily excursions around the neighbourhood.<sup>28</sup>

The school year was divided into four terms: ‘Autumn’ from the second Tuesday in September to the third Monday in November; ‘Christmas’ until the second Monday in February (“including a fortnight’s holiday at Christmas”); ‘Easter’



*Tuckwell Boy's College and Havergal College, Carlton Street, 1906 from Winnipeg, p. 146*

*Directly south of Havergal College was another school, this one for boys, known as the Winnipeg Preparatory School or Tuckwells. Its proprietor was Alfred John Tuckwell (1854-1911), born in England, the son of a Church of England clergyman. He graduated from Queen's College, Oxford and arrived in Winnipeg in 1887, where he took charge of a school operated by All Saints' Anglican Church. After several years Tuckwell opened a day school on Donald Street and then in 1901 moved onto the northwest corner of Broadway and Donald Street, 363 Broadway. 'Tuck' boys wore green and red caps and the two schools were separated by a high board fence that was “breached occasionally” according to former students of Havergal and was the “scene of many a spirited snow fight.” The annual Sports Day for the two schools was the only time that Havergal girls “legally spoke to ‘Tuck’s’ boys.” Tuckwells would only operate at this location for eight years; in 1909 Tuckwell sold the property and closed the school. He died suddenly at his home on McMillan Avenue in May 1911.*

*Manitoba Free Press*, May 30, 1911, p. 15; *Winnipeg Telegram*, June 1, 1911, p. 5; Mrs. Herbert Riley (Ivy Scott) interviewed in *Winnipeg Tribune*, December 31, 1952, p. 11; Audrey Fisher writing in the *Winnipeg Tribune*, May 6, 1933 and Miss M.J. Dalton, ca.1950, BHA.





*Top Left: Havergal College students, ca. 1904, PAM N3363*

*Top Right: Halloween Party, Havergal College, 1905, BHA*



*Left: Gymnastics at Havergal College, no date, BHA.*

*"A unique event in the history of the College took place on that day [October 19, 1909] when the staff and pupils of the College were honoured by a visit from Their Excellencies Earl and Countess Grey during their tour as His Majesty's representatives through Western Canada. Great had been the preparations for the visit. Flags were hung on the College porch, and the form rooms were gay with the colours of the Empire and bright with flowers and plants, each form vying to do greatest honour to their vice-regal visitors."*

Havergal College Magazine, 1909-10, p. 27

to the fourth Monday in April ("including a week's holiday at Easter"); and 'Summer' ending on the last Thursday in June. Resident fees for the year included a one-time Entrance fee of \$12.00 for bedding, linen, etc., and then term charges as follows: \$50.00 board and lodging fee, \$5.00 for laundry, \$1.00 for a seat in church and \$1.50 for the use of the piano once a day. Additionally, a tuition fee was charged and ranged from \$5.00 for the Kindergarten students to \$15.00 for the oldest classes. All totaled, it cost parents approximately \$250.00 to send their daughters to Havergal School for the year.<sup>29</sup>





*Havergal College, 122 Carlton Street, 1906 from Winnipeg, p. 191*

Special fees were also assessed and give an indication of the extra studies available. Art needlework, china painting, dancing, harmony (both class and private), book-keeping, dressmaking, shorthand and German were some of the other courses offered, and could even be taken by “girls not attending the College regularly.”<sup>30</sup>

The school offered Kindergarten and then Forms (Grades) I to IV. After this stage, students could take courses leading to University study (including Latin and Mathematics) or they could be placed in a class with added emphasis on Literature, Music, French and Drawing. The ‘Shell’ Form was also initiated during the school’s second year “to meet the

requirements of girls who have time before them and can do work leading on the University Matriculation.”<sup>31</sup>

To help in the growth of the school, Miss Dalton consulted with staff members and students for a motto and crest. The group finally decided on *Alta Petens* (“Seeking higher things”) as its motto and an emblem that included a soaring eagle on a crest of black, white and orange (the colours of an ox-eyed daisy).<sup>32</sup>

Almost immediately, the school required expansion, the 20-year-old house simply would not provide the space necessary to operate a modern educational facility. The group hired local architect

*“The Annual Masquerade on Nov. 5th was as amusing as ever. The two ‘Suffragettes’ were very prominent, but did not make any converts, though their pamphlets demanding “Up with Women, the rightful heads of Creation!’ and ‘Men to the Wash-Tub’ voiced a decidedly popular opinion.”*

Havergal College Magazine, 1909-10, p. 16

Miss Jones' influence was felt outside the walls of Havergal as well: she was a member of the Women's Canadian Club of Winnipeg, becoming its president in 1911 when it had become the largest organization of its kind in Canada; president of the Local Council of Women; president of the Social Science Study Club; president of the University Women's Club; and member of the National Council of Education. She had also been prominent in the War effort, an active participant in numerous groups seeing to the welfare of soldiers and their families. Miss Jones, as a member of the Women's Canadian Club, was the leading force behind the first scheme to erect a cenotaph honouring World War I soldiers. This plan led to the 1923 construction of the monument that stands in front of the Bank of Montreal Building at the southeast corner of Portage Avenue and Main Street. A paper read before the Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba in 1948 lists Miss Jones as one of the Manitoba's important women of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Lillian B. Thomas, "Some Manitoba Women who did First Things," in Papers read before the Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba, Series III, No. 4 (1947-48), p. 25; and Manitoba Free Press, June 8, 1928, p. 4

Walter Chesterton to draw up plans for an extension at the rear and south side of the house. The cornerstone for the new wing was laid by the Hon.



Miss Jones, principal, 1912, from Havergal Magazine, No. 6 (1912-13), BHA

D.H. McMillan, Manitoba's Lieutenant Governor on June 17, 1902 and was described by one of the attending students:

*The day was cloudless and pleasantly warm, and all departed soon after five, having evidently enjoyed the ceremony.<sup>33</sup>*

The new section was 72 feet long, 40 feet wide and rose three storeys above grade. The new wing included an assembly hall, known affectionately as "The Big School Room," several classrooms, and bedrooms and cubicles for boarders.<sup>34</sup> On the north



Matriculation Class of 1909 in Havergal Magazine, 1909-10, BHA





*Above: Havergal classroom, Miss Foster, teacher, ca.1910, BHA*

*Left: Tennis on lawn at Havergal College, 1915 Prospectus, BHA*

*Below Left: Basketball on lawn at Havergal College (former Tuckwell's School behind), 1915 Prospectus, BHA*



side of the building was a large open field used by the school for its athletic endeavours, both summer and winter.

From early "Distribution of Prize Programmes" it is apparent that the school, under Miss Dalton's guidance, quickly established rules for proper behaviour, and sought to recognize those whose actions were exemplary. Individual and group awards were given for the Tidiest Cubical, Room and Classroom, for Boarders' Conduct and for Boarders' Sewing.<sup>35</sup> Although there were no prefects or "Houses" for the students, Miss Dalton had organized a "Coventry Society" by which groups of students met regularly and "kept law and order among the girls."<sup>36</sup>

Due to health reasons, Miss Dalton was forced to resign her post as headmistress at the end of the 1906 school year.<sup>37</sup> The Board of Directors, in seeking her





*Hockey team of 1912, from Havergal Magazine, No. 6 (1912-13), BHA. The team chant was: Hockey! Hockey! Who are we? We are the girls of H.L.C. Zick, zack, zockey! We play hockey! We are Havergal! Hear us yell- H-A-V-E-R-G-A-L!*

replacement, returned to Havergal College in Toronto and hired Eva L. Jones, L.L.A., the Eastern Canadian institution's Head of Day School. Eva L. Jones was born in Dulwich, London, England in 1869 and graduated from St. Andrew's University, where she had specialized in English, History and Modern Languages. She had also taken additional language education in Paris. Miss Jones immigrated to Canada in ca.1898.<sup>38</sup> She was remembered many years later by former students as an excellent educator,

*"A very fast game [hockey] was played between the mistresses and boarders. During the first half no goals were scored, but in the second half the girls succeeded in scoring one goal, which was quickly followed by one for the mistresses. Playing continued very briskly to the end, the girls only succeeding in getting one more goal, which left the score 2-1 in favour of the girls.*

Havergal College Magazine, 1909-10, p. 55

especially her history of art and Bible lectures.<sup>39</sup>

An excellent public speaker, it was Miss Jones who, on October 8, 1914, called a meeting with a group of alumnae and assisted in the formation of the "Old Girls' Club."<sup>40</sup> She was also involved in the girl guide and brownie organizations (introduced to Canada in 1910)<sup>41</sup> and was instrumental in bringing them to Havergal, a connection that continues to today at Balmoral Hall School.<sup>42</sup>

Miss Jones certainly was convinced that the Winnipeg school could be a success, just as she was convinced that her new students had to dedicate themselves to their education, despite the obstacles Winnipeg provided. In her address to the graduating class of 1907, Miss Jones made clear these opinions:

*I have the strongest belief in the destinies of Winnipeg and the possibilities of its educational life. Culture is not necessarily venerable or even academic; it springs from a willingness to learn, and its growth is limited only by the will of the learner. But after a year spent in your midst I have come to the regretful conclusion that there is no place in which I have yet lived which offers so many distractions and hindrances to a girl during her learning years. Against the juniors and their work here there is not a word to say. They are as active and interested in their school life as healthy children should be, and excuses for home and absence are usually on grounds of health alone. But after twelve years [of age] there comes a change. Then, when their best and most earnest work should begin, when thought and feeling need most direction and development, they are swept away by a flood of social engagements, household duties and small excitements. Evening interruptions are far too frequent and home work [sic] suffers. It is too much, I suppose, in this land of telephones, to hope for the peaceful silence to be found in most English and Scotch homes where school children are preparing their work. Several mothers with whom I have taken counsel on the subject agree with me in blaming the telephone for much of the mischief. I wish it were possible to institute a Winnipeg curfew, rung at six, after which it would not be lawful for any child with evening work to use or approach the telephone.*

And she continued





*Left: Havergal classroom, 1915 Prospectus, BHA*

*Bottom Left: Havergal "studio work," 1915 Prospectus, BHA*

*Below: Morning prayers at Havergal, 1915 Prospectus, BHA*



*How can even ordinary interest in school work be kept up? The life that most of our girls are leading is far too complex and demands more than they can rightly give out. When a girl is overtaxed, let us see to it that her daily life is rational and simple in plan. The home and school should stand first, each with its duties, and I do not think that a growing girl can accomplish more than these supply. The restless craving for excitement, the round of visiting, afternoon or evening, or of shop-gazing, the small gossip, the telephone and the*



*matinee, are far more exhausting to girls' nerves than any thing in the schoolroom.*<sup>43</sup>

The school was obviously flourishing under the watchful eye of Miss Jones, her staff and the Board. In 1909, it was determined that another addition was necessary. Built on the north side of the school, it attempted to mirror the 1902 addition. Built of similar materials — brick and stone — the new wing rose three storeys.<sup>44</sup>

The interior of the completed 1909 complex is described in the Architect's Plans.<sup>45</sup> The basement of the 1902 section held the dining room (with a 7-inch raised platform at one end), with a serving pantry/kitchen/servant's hall nearby. The new wing held four classrooms, a housekeeper's store, cloakroom and lavatories. Between the two wings was the large boiler room, encapsulated in a 9-inch brick firewall for safety. The ground floor of the old Austin House included the office of the headmistress, a drawing room and dining room, the library and a teachers' room. The 1902 section contained a wide corridor and five classrooms (the original assembly hall at the south end of this level was partitioned into two classrooms). A small classroom and the new 2-storey assembly hall with its oak floor were located in the 1909 building. Dormitories (cubicles) were located at the south end of the 1902 building, along with five bedrooms and a large bathroom. The second floor of the Austin House held a sitting room, four bedrooms, a classroom, a bathroom and a small piano room. A new bedroom was built in 1909 and the assembly hall balcony (along the south wall) was also accessed from the second floor corridor. The top floor of the 1902 wing was used as the infirmary, with five bedrooms. In the event of a contagious infection, a dumb-waiter was installed so that meals could be sent up from the kitchen, making it

*Miss Eva L. Jones on morning prayer —  
"Among all your after-School memories of  
our Hall, it is my hope that the best will be of  
that quiet opening of the day's work, when we  
seek in prayer and praise and reading, new  
inspiration, new strength and new resolve for  
the work and effort of a new day."*

Havergal College Magazine, 1909-10, p. 13

"possible to shut off the whole suite."<sup>46</sup> Five other bedrooms and a large bathroom were also found on this level. The servants' bed rooms, seven in total, were found in the Austin House and the 1909 section was used primarily for music — three piano rooms, two music rooms, four bedrooms and a large studio at the north end. The bedrooms on the third floor were referred to as "The Palace Apartments" a name that was still being used in the 1930s.<sup>47</sup>

The school was now able to provide its students with ample space for all their needs — music, academics, athletics and even health. The headmistress, always as much a public relations officer as an administrator and educator, had a proper room to receive guests and entertain. The household staff was also boarded in newer, more comfortable rooms.

The maturity of the College was illustrated on October 8, 1914 with the inauguration of the Havergal Alumnae Association. Headmistress Jones consented to be the Honorary President, former Headmistress M.J. Dalton was First Honorary Vice-President.<sup>48</sup>

# RUPERT'S LAND LADIES' COLLEGE

Just before the start of the school year of 1915, Havergal College ceased to exist. A meeting had been held on July 6, 1915 and the Directors of the College unanimously agreed to change the name to Rupert's Land Ladies' College.<sup>49</sup> The change was deemed necessary to, in the words of that year's Prospectus, to avoid "confusion with the older college of that name in Toronto."<sup>50</sup> The new name remembered the granting of a royal charter in 1670 by King Charles II of England to his cousin Prince Rupert and several colleagues, who organized the Hudson's Bay Company. The land encompassed almost one-third of present-day Canada, including most of Northern Ontario and Northern Québec, all of Manitoba, most

of Saskatchewan, the southern half of Alberta and a large part of the Northwest Territories and the Territory of Nunavut.

Statistics for the school year 1915-1916 show how the school had matured in just over a decade of existence. Miss Jones was in charge of 12 resident mistresses, a health mistress, a housekeeper, bursar and five day and visiting staff. The boarding school had room for 40. The school consisted of the Preparatory Department (Kindergarten and Form I) which had, since the school's founding, accepted male students as well. The Junior School included Forms II, Upper II and IV and the Shell or Remove Form. The Senior School included Forms V, Lower



*Gym class at Rupert's Land College, no date, BHA*



VI or Matriculation I and Upper VI or Matriculation II. The year was divided into four terms, starting on September 10, November 15, February 5, and April 10 and there were 10-day holidays for both Christmas and Easter.<sup>53</sup>

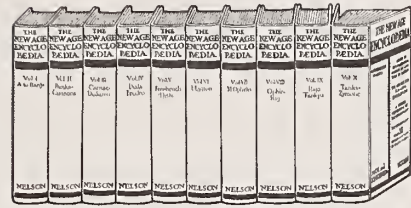
Fees for the school were as follows: \$12 one-time entrance fee, \$100 room/board per year, \$2.50 per term for piano practice and holiday residence charges of \$7.00 per week. Day pupils' costs varied from \$12.00 per term for kindergarten students to \$18.00 for Matriculation Forms, although there were discounts of 10% for multiple student families and 15% for the daughters of clergy. Extra fees were also charged for participation in activities such as dancing, dressmaking, shorthand, carving and modeling, singing and violin.<sup>52</sup>

Rules for the boarders were numerous: girls could receive visitors only on Wednesdays from 4 to 6 p.m. Boarders were not allowed visitors on Sunday but could visit, on the approval of their parents and the principal, someone else's home on Saturday from 3 to 9 p.m. as well as spend one Saturday and one Sunday per month at the home of friends or relatives.

World War I, of course, was global in effect, and the students at Rupert's Land Ladies' College were also affected. Times were difficult and sacrifices were made. The War, and the related downturn in the economy, was also one of the contributing factors to the halt of Winnipeg's meteoric expansion phase after 1900. Other factors included the opening of the Panama Canal in 1914 thereby increasing the use of the west coast as a major grain handling site and the

## Every Rupert's Land Girl

NEEDS THIS SPLENDID NEW ENCYCLOPEDIA  
ON HER STUDY TABLE



**A WHOLE ABSOLUTELY NEW  
BRITISH ENCYCLOPEDIA FOR \$10.00**

(or delivered to any address for \$10.75)

Every man should have two sets—one for the children's study and one for his library. The children need it too. Money cheerfully refunded if not satisfied. Sets ready for delivery about April 20th.

**To RUSSELL-LANG'S BOOKSHOP, Winnipeg**

Please send me one set NELSON'S NEW AGE ENCYCLOPEDIA, cloth, 10 vols., for which I enclose \$10.00.

Mr. Mrs. or Miss

P.O.

Province

*Ad for encyclopædia for Rupert's Land Girls,  
Rupert's Land College Magazine, 1920-21, BHA*

loss of Winnipeg's preferential freight rates that had supported the wholesale trade in the city. These factors combined to end Winnipeg's dominance of the Western Canadian economy.

It was also during the War that Rupert's Land Ladies' College incorporated with St. John's College, in 1917.<sup>53</sup> Ultimate control of the school now rested with the Governors and Board of St. John's College. Reporting to them were the Men's Advisory Board of St. John's and a new Ladies' Executive Board. The Men's and Ladies' Boards operated separately, but did meet as one to discuss issues important to both schools.

*"We took the car as far as the City Limits, and then snowshoed along the Assiniboine River. It was great fun climbing fences and sliding down banks... We made the old woods resound by our merry songs and calls, and arrived at Deer Lodge about half past twelve — all of us very ready for our lunch. We enjoyed it immensely amidst the jokes and jolly conversation, having one long table, with Miss Jones at one end and Miss Springate at the other."*

Isabel Farmer (Shell Form), Havergal College Magazine, 1909-10, pp. 57-8

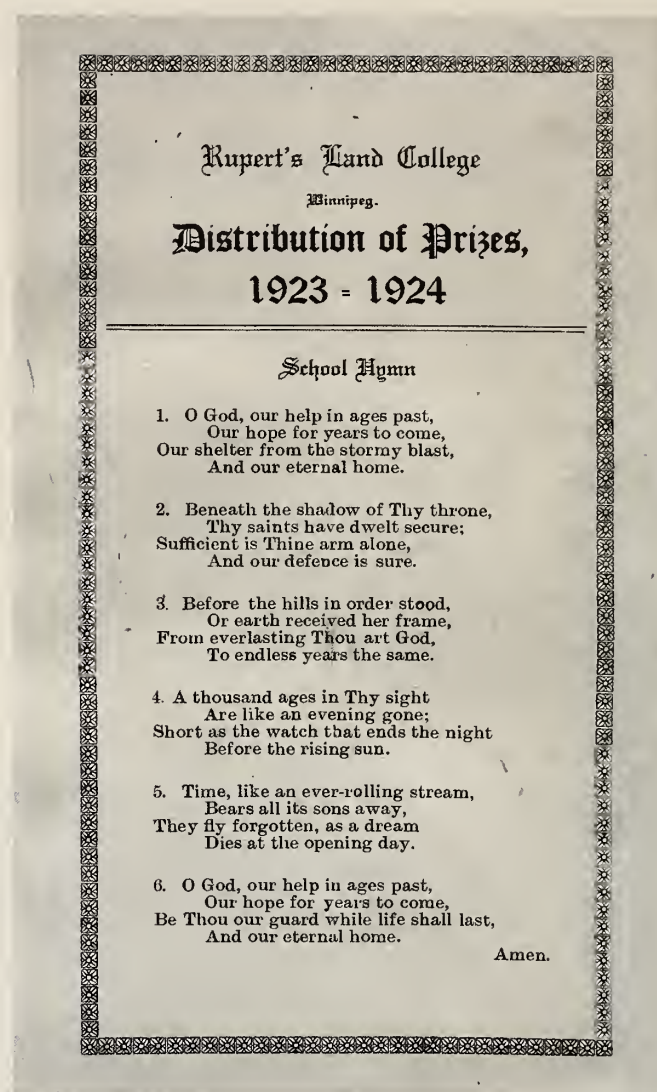
*"The Walking Club is formed to enable girls who like long walks to indulge in that most enjoyable form of exercise. Perhaps the most enjoyable walk was that around Kildonan when we visited the old Presbyterian church there, were rowed across the ferry on the Red River, and raced along the Elmwood Road to catch the last car which would bring us back in time for tea."*

Havergal College Magazine, 1912-13, p. 64

A glimpse of the school seven years after this organizational change gives the impression of a well-run facility that had matured and expanded its influence in the community. The students voted in 1924 for "self-government" for the Senior Forms,<sup>54</sup> meaning that prefects and a head girl were to be chosen and responsible for the "good conduct of the School."<sup>55</sup> The brownies and guides had also become an integral part of the school — the 8th Company had 36 brownies and 22 guides.<sup>56</sup> Principal Jones' love of drama found expression in musical plays put on by various groups within the school — still an integral part of school life to this day.

The "Minutes" of the Ladies' Executive Board during the 1920s were filled with the usual discussion of building repairs, Board appointments and resignations, staffing issues, equipment purchases and the like. By 1927, the population of the school stood at 140 day-students and 33 boarders.<sup>57</sup> At the meeting on January 12, 1927, the "Minutes" briefly note that a discussion was held for "securing of suitable property, rebuilding, etc."<sup>58</sup> These six words would become a central theme for the various Boards, staff, students and parents for the next decade and beyond as the school struggled with its aging facility, its growth as an institution and the expansion of its curriculum.

It appears from subsequent "Minutes" entries that



*Front cover of Rupert's Land College "Distribution of Prizes" pamphlet, 1923-24, BHA*

moving plans accelerated after the January meeting. A committee of the Ladies' Executive Board was struck in March to meet with a real estate agent and discuss houses in Crescentwood that would be suitable for use as a school.<sup>59</sup> At a joint meeting of this Board and the Men's Advisory Board in May, "all agreed that we must find a new location."<sup>60</sup> When the Ladies' Executive Board and the Old Girls' Association met six days later, it was decided that a new Junior School was essential. A resolution passed at the meeting stated:

*In view of the approach of business on our present site, we as the Executive...have a meeting and consider if there is any way by which funds could be raised to build a unit of*



The new school year, 1927-1928, dawned with nothing concrete accomplished regarding a move to a new site. At mid-term, however, the school suffered a setback — Headmistress Jones was forced to leave in January for La Jolla, California in an attempt to improve her failing health. Although by early June Miss Jones was speaking optimistically about her return in September, she died on June 8, 1928 at the age of 59.<sup>62</sup>

The school, of course, had to continue. The Ladies' Executive Board looked at renting a house at 83 Kingsway for its Junior School at \$100/month and the possibility of purchasing the home at 208 Oak Street for \$9,500, although the latter structure was deemed unsuitable in July.<sup>63</sup> There appeared to be two options for the school — either buy a site and construct a temporary building, or purchase a building and use it as a temporary school until finances allowed for the construction of a modern school. It was obviously an issue of some debate within the Board, and it would not be resolved for over a decade.<sup>64</sup> The school, in spite of having no headmistress, opened in the fall of 1928. The search for a replacement for Miss Jones resulted in an offer being made to a Miss James of Havergal School, Toronto. Because of objections from the Head at Havergal, Miss James declined and the position was offered to Miss Gladys E. Millard who accepted.<sup>65</sup>

Miss Millard, at 37, was the same age as Miss Jones when she took over the school. Unlike Miss Jones, however, Miss Millard's career at Rupert's Land Ladies' College coincided with the most desperate economic times for both the college and the world around it. With an aging facility, rampant unemployment, economic collapse and dwindling enrollment, Miss Millard was able to keep the school running. It was a credit to the principal and her staff.

At the beginning of 1928, the school had 214 students, 22 of whom were boarders. There was, at the time, room for more than twice that many in

*G.E. Millard was*

*born in*

*Somerset,*

*England in 1891*

*and attended a*

*private school*

*there. Her*

*parents died*

*before she was 18*

*and she was*

*adopted by Dr.*

*Herford, one of Britain's first women*

*psychiatrists. Her studies at the University of London in Biology were interrupted by World War I and afterwards, she came to Canada and joined the staff at Rupert's Land College, becoming head of day school by 1921. She, like her predecessor, was active in the Girl Guides Association, awarded the Medal of Merit by Girl Guide founder Lady Baden-Powell. She was also known for her excellence in music training. After leaving Rupert's Land, she spent 12 years as headmistress at Havergal College, Toronto, even though ill health confined her to a wheelchair in her last years there. She was finally forced to seek a gentler climate and moved to Victoria, B.C., where she died on October 15, 1964.*



*Miss G.E. Millard, principal of Rupert's Land College, 1930, in The Eagle, Vol. II (May 1930), BHA*

*The Chronicle*, newsletter of Havergal College, Toronto, 1937 and *Ludemus*, yearbook of Havergal College, Toronto, 1952 (both references courtesy of L. Holstead, Library Assistant, Havergal College, Toronto) "Balmoral Hall Briefs;" and C. Gossage, *A Question of Privilege* (Toronto: Peter Martin Associates Limited, 1977), pp. 157

1915 "Time-Table for House Girls"

6:45 — *Rising Bell*  
7:30 — *Breakfast*  
8:15 — *Walk or Games*  
9:00-12:30 — *Morning School*  
12:30 — *Dinner*  
1:15 — *Rest*  
2:00 — *Afternoon School*  
2:45 — *Preparation or Gymnasium*

3:30 — *Afternoon Tea*

3:40 — *Walk or Games or Gymnasium*  
4:20 — *Study and Practice*  
6:15 — *Dressing Bell*  
6:30 — *Supper*  
7:00 — *Prayers*  
8:00-9:00 — *Recreation Hour*  
9:30 — *Lights Out*

Rupert's Land Ladies' College Prospectus, 1915, p. 17

residence. The junior students were living in small cubicles, the senior girls in single and double rooms. Gym classes were taken by 114 students, there were 57 taking dance, 11 special art, 21 music and 24 in the Kindergarten. Busing to and from Crescentwood, which had become a major concern, was being offered to parents for \$2.40 per month.<sup>66</sup>

The 1929-1930 school year saw the introduction of "Houses" to divide the student population. Machray, Matheson, Dalton and Jones houses remembered two pioneers in the Anglican Church in Western Canada and the school's first two headmistresses respectively.



*Unnamed Kindergarten class, 1929-30, BHA*

Everyone was quite pleased by this innovation.<sup>67</sup>

During the early part of 1929, a new science room was built and first used on April 10, 1929. Repairs to Miss Millard's sitting room and bathroom, in the form of redecorating and refurnishing, were also completed.<sup>68</sup> These changes, however, did not alter the fact that the buildings themselves were beginning to show signs of their age, both in terms of the need for new space for the new courses offered and the actual brick and mortar. A report late in the school year of 1929 outlined \$10,000 of necessary repair work. Of this amount, the Ladies' Executive Board, along with the Men's Advisory Board, voted to complete \$7,000 worth of work. The group also rejected a suggestion to purchase the Nanton Estate on Roslyn Road for \$85,000.

As this old institution struggled to keep pace with the evolving educational system and the deterioration of its buildings, a new girls' school was taking its first tentative steps and after four years of work, finally opened its doors.



# FATHER AND SON — THE DREAMER AND THE DOER & THE FOUNDING OF RIVERBEND SCHOOL

*In the opinion of this Conference it is both desirable and practicable to establish in Winnipeg a Ladies' College under the control of the Conference. That a Committee of fifteen be appointed for the purpose of developing and forwarding the project.<sup>69</sup>*

This 1926 resolution, passed by the United Church Conference of Manitoba, had grown out of a suggestion at the first Conference, held in 1925, that a committee look at the possibility of organizing a girls' school in the city. The group chosen to complete the fact-finding exercise was: Dr. W.A. Cooke, Dr. John Mackay, Professor A.E. Hetherington, Mrs. R.F. McWilliams, Mrs. Jabez Miller, Mrs. J.T. Haig and the group's leader and originator of the idea, Sir James Albert Manning Aikins.<sup>70</sup>

This Committee reported on its findings at the 1926 Conference. The new school, according to the Committee, should offer the best possible education to those who could afford it. The objective was "to establish a school of such high standards that those possessed of considerable financial ability would be glad to pay well for its services." The Committee also made clear that the school had to be self-sustaining and that the new Board could "under no circumstances appeal to the Church for assistance."<sup>71</sup> The Conference whole-heartedly approved of the scheme and enlarged the Committee to speed up the process. But through 1927 and 1928, little progress was made and it took the 1929 death of the originator of the idea, Sir J.A.M. Aikins, to get the project moving again.

Sir James Albert Manning Aikins was truly one of the most influential men in Western Canada. This influence was felt in many facets of society: he was a lawyer, a politician, an entrepreneur and a philanthropist. Aikins' penchant for public service came from his father, the Hon. James Cox Aikins,



*Sir James A.M. Aikins, Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba,  
ca.1920, PAM*

who spent more than 30 years in public office.

J.A.M. Aikins was born near the village of Grahamsville, County Peel, Upper Canada on December 10, 1851. When his father, J.C. Aikins (1823-1904),<sup>72</sup> was called to the Senate, the family moved to Toronto in 1868 and J.A.M. Aikins attended Upper Canada College, one of the most prestigious boy's schools in the province. He had a busy time at the College, participating in a number of activities like football, drama and, according to one account, hauling a cow up to the belfry and attaching the college bell rope to its horns as a prank.<sup>73</sup> He also became active in the church and led several classes for adults and youths. After his graduation from the College, he enrolled at the University of Toronto, beginning his studies in 1870. Specializing in English literature and political economics, he obtained his B.A. in 1875 and became a law student,



*Sir J.A.M. Aikins House, ca.1920, BHA*

articling for the firm of Cameron, McMichael and Hoskins. He was called to the Ontario bar in 1878 but he had other plans.<sup>74</sup>

His father's work on the Dominion Lands Act and his eldest brother's work in the West as a surveyor had given Aikins a unique perspective on the region.<sup>75</sup> It was, in his estimation, the land of limitless opportunity, of infinite potential or, as he would

reflect many years later, a place with "ample room to grow."<sup>76</sup> He toured southern Manitoba with his brother in August 1878, making the arduous journey west by boat to Duluth, Minnesota, train to Fisher's Landing and then steamer to Winnipeg. Impressed with what he saw, Aikins was back in early 1879 to launch his legal career. He was called to the Manitoba Bar the same year and was appointed counsel for the Department of Justice, a position he held until 1896.<sup>77</sup>

Aikins' timing was perfect. He had arrived in Winnipeg and established himself just before the C.P.R. real estate boom and was able to take advantage of the business the land transactions generated and also participate in the actual speculation. The collapse of the boom also created legal work for Aikins.

In 1881, he was hired as western counsel for the C.P.R., working for the company for 30 years. In 1882, he was called to the North-West Territories Bar



*Front yard and the two Aikins houses, n.d., BHA*





*G.H. Aikins, no date, PAM*

and was appointed counsel for the Government of Manitoba (the same year his father began his six-year term as Manitoba's fourth Lieutenant Governor).<sup>78</sup> He was appointed Queen's Counsel in 1884 and in September 1885 was a junior counsel for the Crown in the appeal of Louis Riel's conviction.<sup>79</sup> In just six short years, Aikins had used a combination of ambition, skill and family connections to become one of the most influential lawyers in Western Canada. His work for the provincial and federal governments and his ties with the railway company placed him at the forefront of Western Canadian development, as a lawyer and a businessman.

Beyond his legal work, Aikins was also extremely busy. His devotion to his Methodist faith found expression in his work at Grace Church through Sunday school and Bible classes. He worked tirelessly to promote the Boy Scout organization and was a founder and first president of the Winnipeg



*G.H. Aikins House, the Red House, ca.1931, BHA*



*“Early in December two rinks were flooded, one on the badminton court and one behind the house on a large patch of ground facing the street. Two slides were made and every day long lines of girls wrapped in large sweaters, and wearing many pairs of stockings could be seen on their way to the rinks or the garage to get toboggans.”*

Vox Fluminis, 1930, p. 13

Y.M.C.A.<sup>80</sup> His keen interest in education led him to a number of diverse projects: he was an active member and 20-year (1887-1907) Chairman of the Board of Directors of Wesley College (present-day University of Winnipeg) and was influential in acquiring the land in November 1891 on which the University now stands;<sup>81</sup> and he was honorary bursar of the University of Manitoba for 20 years, tending to their books and accounts.<sup>82</sup>

On September 6, 1899, Aikins married Mary French Colby (1862-1931) in Quebec. Upon their return to Manitoba, Aikins hired the services of James Hamilton Gordon Russell, one of the city's most accomplished architects, to design a new home.<sup>83</sup> Russell chose the Georgian Revival style for the house, a classically based architecture utilizing subdued ornamentation. Unique to Aikins' home was its two grand entrances — one facing the river and the other Langside Street — an acknowledgement of the importance of the river and use of the riverbank for entertaining. The newly completed residence also became the home for the couple's two daughters (a third daughter died shortly after birth): Mary Alberta Helena “Helen” (1902-1979) and Elizabeth Grace Colby (1903- ).<sup>84</sup>

Inside, the 20-room home was comfortably finished with large, open rooms and dark wood

accenting throughout. The main floor featured a living room and office on the east side of the building and a large kitchen/pantry area in the northwest corner. Along the rear (south side) of the home was a formal dining room (panelled in walnut) with a small, connected sitting room to the east. A fireplace in this room includes a mantle with the phrase “Let something good be said.” An ornate main staircase with dark oak panelling led to the second floor bedrooms, as did a plainer staircase located between the kitchen and dining room. This service staircase ran to the top floor.

The grounds of the new house were also special, including lilacs brought from Ottawa that became a traditional decoration at Riverbend/Balmoral Hall.<sup>85</sup> Originally eight acres, the manicured lawn and riverbank and numerous gardens were used frequently for formal parties. A stone and wrought iron fence surrounded the property. The extensive view of the nearby river gave the house its name — Riverbend. The home, numbered 71 Langside Street, was finally ready for the Aikins family in 1901 and was luxurious and well appointed, a suitable home for one of the city's elite families.

In August 1916, Aikins followed in his father's footsteps, becoming Manitoba's ninth Lieutenant Governor. His tenure in this office lasted two terms before he retired from public life in October 1926.<sup>86</sup> One of Aikins' greatest loves was the Boy Scout movement and he devoted a great deal of time to it after his retirement from Government House. He financed the movement for many years and offered part of his property in Headingley for any troop needing a camping site.<sup>87</sup> He was appointed Chief Scout of Manitoba in 1926.<sup>88</sup>

The occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of Aikins' admittance to the Manitoba Bar was celebrated both in the afternoon at the Law Courts Building and in the evening with a gala dinner at the Royal Alexandra Hotel on February 25, 1929. Unfortunately, Aikins had suffered a heart attack the weekend before and was unable to attend either function. A book of



*Sir J.A.M. Aikins and Lady Aikins, son Gordon and wife Myrtle and four daughters at the steps of Government House, October 3, 1926, Foote Collection, PAM, N1627*

letters of appreciation had been compiled and was given to him. Prime Minister Mackenzie King's letter congratulated Aikins on "the ability, zeal, and fidelity with which, for half a century, you have served your King, your country and your profession."<sup>89</sup>

Although a statement was read from Aikins at the dinner that his doctors promised he would quickly recover, he died on Saturday, March 2, 1929 at his home on Langside Street.<sup>90</sup> Tributes poured in from all across the country. As a sign of respect, his body lay in state from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the legislative chamber of the Legislature on Monday, March 4th and approximately 3,000 citizens filed past. His honour guard was made up of members of the 1st Battalion Winnipeg Rifles, as Aikins had, for many

years, been its honorary colonel. He was buried at St. John's cemetery after a private service at the home of his son, G.H. Aikins, 69 Langside Street.<sup>91</sup>

Given his strong support of the church and of education in the province, it was not surprising to find that his Will included the following term:

*To pay to the United Church of Canada \$100,000 in trust to invest the same for income and to use the income therefrom annually towards the creation and maintenance of a girls' school in the City of Winnipeg under the auspices and care of the United Church of Canada.<sup>92</sup>*

But the large sum of money was by no means the end of the story, only a beginning. It was left for another Aikins to complete the onerous task of



organizing and building the institution from scratch.

Gordon Harold Aikins was born in Winnipeg on August 20, 1887, second son of James Aikins and his first wife May. He was educated at the Toronto Church School and then returned to Winnipeg and earned his B.A. from the University of Manitoba in 1907. He then attended the Chicago Law School and was called to the Manitoba Bar in 1910. The following year he married Myrtle Chalmers Clint and together the couple had four daughters. He enlisted in the army with the 184<sup>th</sup> Battalion in 1915 and went overseas as a major. By the end of the war he was brigadier major of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian infantry brigade and had received a Distinguished Service Order in 1918.

Upon his return to Winnipeg, Colonel Aikins decided to build a home for his family. Construction began in 1919 immediately west of his father's house on Langside Street. Built of red brick, the two-and-a-half storey, 14-room house featured a raised stone

foundation, a full-width, one-storey porch on the front (north) façade with a small screened-in deck above.

After the war he was influential in establishing a system of free legal service for members of the armed forces. He was created King's Counsel in 1925 and, following in the footsteps of his father, was named vice-president of the Canadian Bar Association in 1942 and president the following year. He too was a director of the Imperial Bank of Canada and Great-West Life Assurance Company, as well as numerous other regional companies. In recognition of his many years of service to the legal profession, he received an honorary degree of doctor of laws from Laval University in 1953. The family moved out of the Langside Street home in 1930 and moved onto Roslyn Road. It was there that G.H. Aikins died on May 1, 1954 at the age of 67.<sup>93</sup>

# THE OPENING OF RIVERBEND SCHOOL

It is hard to image the magnitude of the task that lay before Harold Aikins and members of the United Church after Sir James Aikins' death and the reading of his will. Such a generous gift had to be acted upon, but to organize a school in half a year was certainly a daunting task. There were hundreds, perhaps thousands of telegrams, letters and notes that travelled around the country and across the ocean from April to September and well into the fall.<sup>94</sup> A principal had to be found after careful scrutiny, reference checks and personal interviews. The same process was needed for hiring the staff. Notices had to be sent to churches and newspapers across Western Canada in order to bring students to Winnipeg. Administrative boards were organized, their memberships finalized. The physical requirements of the school needed attention. All these concerns were being dealt with while the task of determining the direction the new school should take was debated and refined and the appropriate curriculum selected.

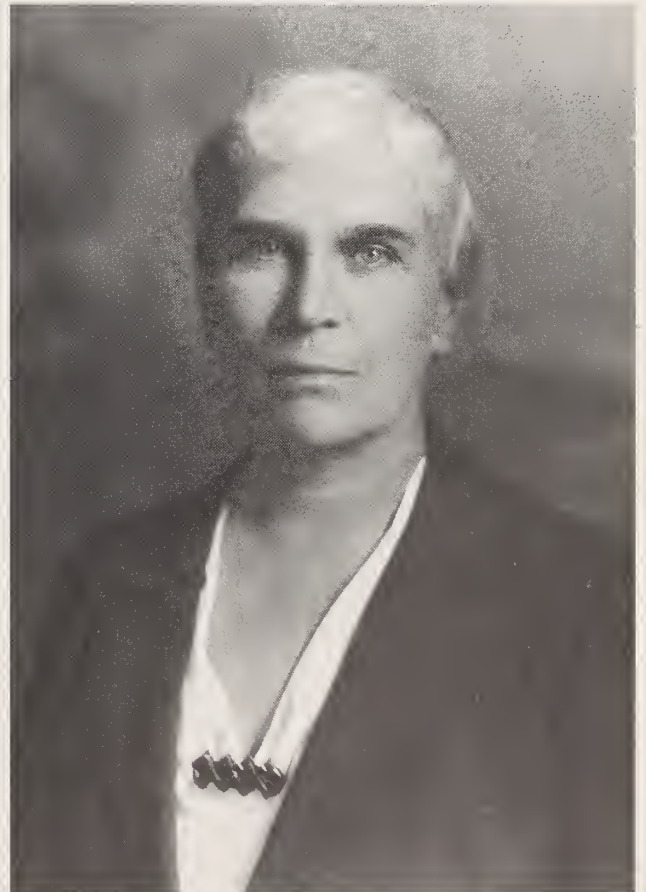
Upon learning of the bequest from his father, Harold Aikins rolled up his sleeves and began the process of seeing his father's dream become a reality. First, he assembled a group of influential citizens to raise sufficient funds to put the new school on a firm financial foundation — the United Church Conference Committee had estimated that the school needed \$100,000 just to begin operations in 1929.<sup>95</sup> The original executive of 1929 included James A. Richardson (1885-1939), grain and aviation executive, Isaac Pitblado (1867-1964), lawyer and grain marketing expert, Dr. John Mackay (1870-1938), principal of Manitoba College, and D'Alton C. Coleman, vice-president of the Canadian Pacific Railway (western lines) and chairman of the Board of Governors of the University of Manitoba.<sup>96</sup>

His sister Mary (Mrs. F.J.J. Ney) was also helpful, assisting in finding a suitable English teacher while she was in England.<sup>97</sup> The school benefited from the generous donation of furniture and equipment from

Winnipeggers, the gifts valued at \$17,000.<sup>98</sup> Finally, Aikins generously offered the school his home and that of his late father, as well as the eight acres of property on which they stood. The gift was conservatively valued at \$75,000<sup>99</sup> and in recognition of this generosity, the new school would take the name of Sir Aikins' house — Riverbend.

The Aikins' land and buildings were officially turned over to G.H. Aikins, I. Pitblado and James Richardson to "hold the same in trust...pending incorporation" (which occurred by special act of the Provincial Legislature in 1931).<sup>100</sup>

Perhaps most importantly, Aikins was able to enlist the help of Mrs. R.F. McWilliams, secretary of the Conference Committee on the school and one of Winnipeg's leading women, to take on many of the key administrative tasks in 1929. Born Margaret



*Mrs. R.F. McWilliams, no date, BHA*





Miss Joan M.V. Foster, 1930, in "  
*Vox Fluminis*," 1930, BHA

*Joan M.V. Foster was the daughter of Senator Walter E. Foster (1873-1947), a former Liberal premier of New Brunswick (1917-1923). She received her B.A. from Oxford and her M.A. from McGill.*

Winnipeg Free Press, June 22, 1929

May "Maggie" Stovel on January 27, 1875 in Toronto, she was orphaned at an early age but was undeterred by the setback. She finished school and decided to attend the University of Toronto,

becoming the first woman to graduate with a political economics degree in 1898. For the next five years, she worked as a journalist in Minneapolis, Minnesota and Detroit, Michigan, starting a very successful children's page at the Detroit Journal in 1901.<sup>101</sup> In 1903, she married a former University of Toronto colleague, Roland Fairbairn McWilliams (1874-1957), a lawyer who would later become mayor of his hometown, Peterborough, Ontario. In 1906, R.F. McWilliams was seeking greener pastures and arranged to join the law offices of J.A.M. Aikins in Winnipeg. The couple moved west three years later.

Mrs. McWilliams worked as a free-lance journalist and volunteered to organize a babies' milk program and to start a free kindergarten. She became a charter member of the University Women's Club joining the organization in May 1911 and becoming its president for 1913 and 1914. She was the first president of the Canadian Federation of University Women and the first vice-president of the International Federation of University Women. She wrote two history books on Manitoba, *Women of Red River* in 1923 and *Manitoba Milestones* in 1928, authored several other books, help resurrect and revitalize the Manitoba Historical Society and became Winnipeg's second female alderman, winning four consecutive terms in the 1930s.<sup>102</sup> For over 30 years (stopping in 1947), her "current events" classes for women were a Winnipeg institution and her husband served the province as Lieutenant Governor from 1940-1953.

She would continue to support and work for the school up to her sudden death on April 12, 1952. The news of her passing was reported throughout the country and in the United States, so profound had been her influence.<sup>103</sup> She was sorely missed within the halls of Riverbend.

Aikins and McWilliams conversed via telegrams on a plethora of issues — from trying to arrange the use of St. Stephen's Church sports equipment "for small consideration"<sup>104</sup> to negotiating with the City of Winnipeg over fire escapes in order to avoid "any accident [that] would destroy what we have already



*Original staff and students of Riverbend School, 1929-30, 1930 Prospectus, BHA*

accomplished.”<sup>105</sup>

The search for a headmistress was obviously the most important and pressing of matters and after several candidates were approached and either rejected by the Board or the offer declined by the candidate, Miss Joan M.V. Foster was chosen. A large advertisement in the Winnipeg Free Press, June 22, 1929 outlined the organization of the new school, introduced Miss Foster and stated that

*While the Riverbend School is to be operated under the direction of the United Church, it is the expressed plan of the trustees, following the wish of the late Sir James, the actual founder, to maintain the institution as one not controlled by denominational aims, but as a school offering an education of fundamentals of all education and in those subjects which make for a wider understanding of modern culture.<sup>106</sup>*

The school's goals and objectives were further outlined in a letter to G.H. Aikins from the Riverbend

Committee on Academic Matters in early 1930:

*The aim should be to simulate the student to think for herself rather than merely to absorb knowledge. The mind of the student must not only be stored but ordered so that she may be launched upon the quest of the truest and best philosophy of life.*

*“The Library Club — One day it was suggested that every other Friday afternoon the Grade XI's and XII's meet together...after another meeting it was suggested that we toast marshmallows over the fire in the summer-house. So some brought tins of marshmallows to the next meeting and we toasted them on long sticks.”*

Vox Fluminis, 1930, p. 17



*...to awaken the student to the vital relationship between intelligence, on the one hand, and manners and morals on the other.*

*...to follow significant educational experiments and to use the school, without detriment to the success of the students' examinations, as a laboratory school.*

One of the areas of study emphasized from the beginning was French, with special attention given to Conversational French. Miss Gertrude Amies was the first teacher; she had won the French Government scholarship for Manitoba in 1926, studying at the Sorbonne in Paris. She would become Mrs. Stanley

B. Laing and remain with the school into the 1940s after a three-year hiatus in the late 1930s.<sup>107</sup>

The school adopted the "Country Day School" system, giving the students games hours after the mid-day dinner and then a "supervised study" or "homework" period. A large music department was also organized.<sup>108</sup>

Unfortunately for the school, the stock market crash of October 1929 undermined much of the hard work done by its Board in the preceding months. Every Winnipeg institution would feel the negative affects of this event, including Winnipeg's other girls' school.

# RUPERT'S LAND LADIES' COLLEGE, 1930-1950

The College on Carlton Street, already overcrowded in its aging and increasingly outdated facility, found life even tougher during the 1930s. Meetings of the Boards during this period were constantly punctuated with reports on needed repairs throughout the building. At the end of the 1931 school year, for example, the Ladies' Executive Board and the Men's Advisory Board were informed that repairs were desperately needed to the roof, the stairs to the basement cloakroom, the floor in the Assembly Room and the ceilings in both the Assembly Room and Hall.<sup>109</sup>

In spite of the problems, the school continued to educate. One of the major events of the year was the annual Gym Display and Dancing Performance held at the Walker Theatre on February 27, 1930. Every ticket was sold and the event was a huge success.<sup>110</sup> Other extra-curricular activities in 1930 included a Glee Club, Literary and Debating societies and a Handcrafts Class. Fees charged for the school year were set at \$600 for boarders and ranged from \$75 for day pupils in Kindergarten and First Form to \$120 for grades IX to XII.<sup>111</sup>

To alleviate the overcrowding problem, the school rented a house on Roslyn Road for \$75/month. Known as the Roslyn Road School and the Fort Rouge Preparatory School, it opened early in the 1931-1932 school year but closed at the end of the year — apparently too expensive to continue. A motion was also carried in June 1932 that boys above Grade II were not to be admitted to the school, although this appears to have been the norm.<sup>112</sup>

An unfortunate incident took place in the early 1930s. The school had, for many years, managed a Ladies' School Endowment Fund, used to offset the reduced fees paid by the daughters of clergy. The school had also started the Eva L. Jones Memorial Fund after her untimely death. It was discovered early in the 1932 school year that both funds, which

had been turned over to the Governing Body of St. John's College, had been lost. Rupert's Land College officials actually sought legal redress although it was later determined that the funds had found their way into the St. John's College General Fund and were reinstated in November 1936.<sup>113</sup>

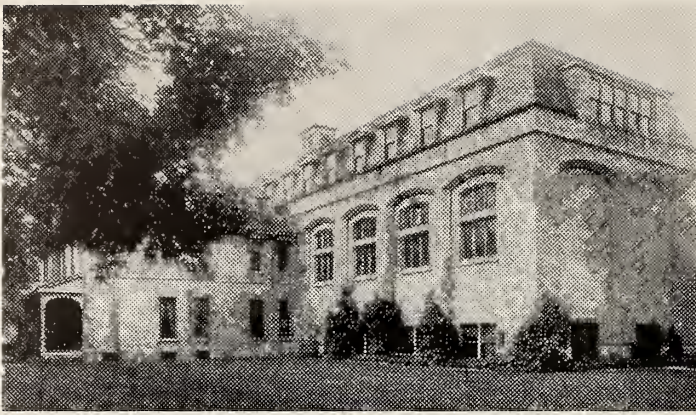
Budgets were continually reduced throughout the 1930s. As a result, the gymnastics display was modified for 1932, taking place on Lady Nanton's grounds on Roslyn Road rather than at a downtown theatre — "taking the form of a Garden Party, with tea at the Junior School."<sup>114</sup> The staff took several pay cuts and some staff members were not re-hired at the end of the 1931-1932 year, the remaining staff given additional responsibilities.

The true spirit of the institution was not affected, however, as seen by the raising of funds to support native students at the Hay River Mission at Great Slave Lake and to donate to the Zenana Bible and Medical Mission in India. Each Form provided a hamper of food and clothing and toys for Winnipeg families in need at Christmas.<sup>115</sup> The yearbooks for

*"Owing to the increase in numbers in the School in 1930, Prize-Giving was held in the Crystal Ballroom of the Royal Alexandra Hotel, on June 14th, 1930. The girls in their new white uniforms, and the graduating class with their bouquets of sunburst roses, opened the ceremony with a slow march through the ballroom, taking their seats at the front, the graduating class being seated on the platform."*

D. Bains, student, in The Eagle, 1931, p. 11





*Rupert's Land College as seen from the north, no date, from Prospectus, BHA*

the decade underline this normalcy in the face of adversity.

In March 1933, Principal Millard offered to take another salary reduction; the response to her suggestion speaks volumes:

*Mrs. Collum expressed very definite disapproval of Miss Millard taking a further cut as she was already doing the work of two people and, that the economies already realized were largely due to her unfailing interest and diligence in these matters.<sup>116</sup>*

Despite the economic troubles, the 1932-1933 saw the opening of the new domestic science department and its new teacher, Mrs. Rumbal, who doubled as a housekeeper for the residence.<sup>117</sup> Closing exercises were held at the Civic Auditorium. A principal's report to the Ladies' Executive Board dated March 20, 1934 stated:

*Owing to the serious and dangerous condition of the Assembly Hall floor, emergency and temporary repairs had been completed... [and] serious cracks have been developing in the walls.<sup>118</sup>*

Principal Millard also noted "there is a pressing need of maintaining and augmenting the enrollment."<sup>119</sup> The financial problems were not, apparently, affecting student results. Miss Millard was forced to raise the level for academic awards to 80% from 75% because so many students had standing at the lower level. Those students with marks from 75-80% received honourable mention.<sup>120</sup> The opening of the 1934-1935 year had 172 pupils registered (the school finished the year with 188) and the principal and staff decided to make a concerted effort "against the use of slang, and the encouragement of neatness."<sup>121</sup>

The year 1935-1936 saw the celebration of the school's 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the 21<sup>st</sup> for the Alumnae (Old Girls') Association. A serious flu epidemic caused upheaval until it subsided in February 1936. Rupert's Land School was accredited as a secondary school by the Department of Education.<sup>122</sup> Upon hearing more bad news about the state of the school's

## EATON'S Know the Rules about Rupert's Land Uniforms!

We have them tailored to specifications—correct in color—in sponsored styles for classroom wear. Dark green tunics with deep pleats that hold their shape through school activities—Dark green blazers, berets or regulation hats. Tan colored blouses of mercerized cotton broadcloths. Bloomers and stockings for gymnasium and class wear. Choose them all on our **Fifth Floor.**

**Tunic, Blouse, Blazer**  
Girls' School Togs Section  
Fifth Floor.

**Beret, Felt Hat**  
Girls' Millinery Section,  
Fifth Floor.

**Bloomers,**  
Girls' Underwear Section,  
Fifth Floor.

**Gymnasium and  
School Stockings**  
Children's Hosiery Section  
Fifth Floor.



**THE T. EATON CO. LIMITED**

*Eaton's ad for Rupert's Land uniforms, The Eagle, Vol. 7 (June 1939), BHA*



*Common room at Rupert's Land College, no date, BHA*

building, an Executive Board member was heard to say:

*The building is showing serious cracks in the fabric and one cries with Job, 'Oh Lord, how long?'*<sup>123</sup>

The inaugural House parties began in the spring of 1936 and were well received by staff and students alike. The Old Girls' Association provided the principal with a secretary and typewriter to alleviate some of her office duties.<sup>124</sup> In the fall of 1936, Rupert's Land College opened with 12 Grade I

students, 15 from grades II and III and only 8 in grades IV and V. The upper grades had classes of varying sizes: 14 in Grade VI and 12, 20, 25, 17, 31 and 13 in grades VII, VIII, IX, X, XI and XII respectively.<sup>125</sup> That year, there were clubs for Literature, German, French and Art; the Literary Club defeating a group from Ravenscourt School in a debate. In order to facilitate general repairs to the school, a workman was hired for two months in February 1937.<sup>126</sup>

In April 1937, students, staff and administration

*"SCIENCE- The first expedition of note this year was to the Hudson's Bay Company, where the Grade XI and XII Physics Classes enjoyed an afternoon going over the fur-storage department, the heating apparatus, the sprinkler system and the refrigerating plant of the company.*

Phoebe Morris (Grade XI) in *The Eagle*, 1936, p. 15





*Elsie M. Bartlett had taught Senior Math at Rupert's Land from 1930-35, being forced to resign and return to England on family matters. With the closure of the school in 1950, Miss Bartlett became the headmistress at Strathallan Girl's College in Hamilton, Ontario, remaining there until her retirement in 1957.*

Winnipeg Tribune, June 29, 1968

learned sadly that Principal Millard had accepted the position of principal at Havergal College in Toronto, effective at the end of the school year. At a special meeting of the Board of Directors, it was suggested that the position be offered to Miss Elsie M. Bartlett, a former teacher at Rupert's Land College.<sup>127</sup> The offer was made and accepted.

To welcome Miss Bartlett, the school saw over \$10,000 worth of renovations completed in the summer of 1937. A year later, in an impassioned letter from the Chairman of the Finance Committee to the president of the Rupert's Land College Alumnae, another \$9,000 worth of repairs were outlined, including foundation work and renovating and rewiring the kitchen. The Alumnae Association was asked to donate \$1,500 of this total, unfortunately, the group felt it could offer only \$100.<sup>128</sup>

During the 1938-39 year, the name of the

institution was officially changed to "Rupert's Land Girls' School."

Of course, everything changed on September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1939 when Great Britain declared war on Germany, followed a week later by the announcement that Canada had done the same. Over the next six years, life in Canada revolved around the war effort and the reports on the one-million men and women who fought. But even with their thoughts overseas, life at Rupert's Land College continued.

In September 1939, the school altered its student government organization. The old system had two girls chosen from each of the Grades IX to XII. The new system was House-based — four House captains, the Sports Captain, the Head Girl and two elected representatives from each House combined to create the Student Council.<sup>129</sup> The problems with the buildings continued, exacerbated by a lack of money and materials. Fees for the school year ranged from \$80 for Kindergarten students to \$620 for grades IX to XII.<sup>130</sup>

One of the consequences of the war was the evacuation of children out of London because of the nightly German bombing raids. Many of the children were sent to North America for the duration of the war to ensure their safety. Several students came to

*"On Monday, May 16, 1938, we were favoured with one of the greatest honours Rupert's Land School has ever received: a visit from our Governor-General, Lord Tweedsmuir. At two o'clock in the afternoon we were in our respective classrooms waiting, with clean blouses, pressed tunics and a rather nervous expectancy..."*

Helen Martin and Ruth Fryer (Grade X), The Eagle, Vol. 7, 1939, p. 36

Rupert's Land College and were enrolled at approximately half the normal rate, through the kindness of local donors. According to a letter from Principal Bartlett to one father, this arrangement was made "knowing that all parents concerned would do all they could after the war to cover the cost of their children's schooling."<sup>131</sup>

With Victory in Europe (VE) Day, May 8, 1945 signalling the cessation of the war in Europe and VE (Victory over Japan) Day, August 15, 1945, the world began to look at ways to restore itself and to avoid future conflicts. On a much smaller scale, the students of Rupert's Land College were also asked to seek solutions and make a difference in society.

Enrollment at the school continued to rise through the late 1940s, making it difficult to offer the quality

education wished for by parents, staff and administrators. With 200-day students and 45 boarders at the start of the 1945-1946 year, a newspaper account remarked that the school's space was taxed to the limit.<sup>132</sup> The next year, the totals were higher — 210-day and 48-boarder students.<sup>133</sup>

It became obvious that a solution needed to be found. There was no question that as an institution, a day/residential girls' school continued to be well received in Winnipeg. Equally obvious was the fact that the Carlton Street facility was well past its prime. The administrators realized it was in desperate need of replacement but did not have the financial wherewithal to build a new structure. The answer would come from the school they had, for nearly 20 years, maintained a healthy rivalry with.



## RIVERBEND SCHOOL, 1929-1950



*Cast of The Twelfth Night, by W. Shakespeare, Grade IX, X, XI play, December 1933, BHA*

With much of the groundwork done, Riverbend School officially opened in September 1929 with a small but ever-growing enrollment (starting with only 14 pupils, it had grown to 153 by the start of the 1930-1931 school year).<sup>134</sup> Sir J.A.M. Aikins House became known as the 'White House' and included space for the headmistress and senior school classrooms on the ground floor, junior school classrooms on the second floor and residence for boarders and staff on the top level. The former G.H. Aikins Residence, the 'Red House,' was used for junior school classroom on the ground floor, junior residential space on upper levels and until 1956,

science laboratories in the basement.<sup>135</sup>

These allocations were only temporary, however, because work began during the summer on a new building on the property.<sup>136</sup> The \$70,000 "Junior School" included a large, well-equipped dining room (with attached kitchen), music practice rooms, locker rooms and showers in the basement, six large classrooms for the junior students on the ground floor and an Assembly Hall/Gymnasium of over 2,700 square feet on the top floor (a small balcony was built at the east end of the Gymnasium).<sup>137</sup> This building was connected to the White House by means of an underground corridor.<sup>138</sup>





*"Alice in Wonderland" cast, Feb. 23, 1934. Louise Phillipps is Alice, Peggy Murray the White Rabbit and Betty Newcombe the Queen of Hearts, BHA*



*Cast, April 30, 1937, BHA*

The Boarders had a strict daily schedule<sup>139</sup>  
beginning with the 7 a.m. rising bell:

- 7:30 a.m. — breakfast
- 8 — tidy rooms
- 8:30 — morning walk with Physical Training  
Mistress
- 9-4:40 p.m. — school
- 6 — dress for supper
- 6:30 — supper
- 7:30-8:30 — study for those in senior school
- 9 — bed (earlier for younger pupils)
- 9:30 — lights out (10 for senior students)

Sunday was Divine Service followed by a rest  
hour and then letter writing

School life was varied and busy. There were musical clubs, skating and skiing parties, badminton and archery, Halloween and Valentine parties, inter-class basketball games (as well as two against the girls from Rupert's Land College), a Christmas pageant and Library, French and Glee clubs. The first Head Girl, Isabelle Hill, was chosen by the headmistress and staff, as was a student council comprised of the Head Girl and six others. The school would publish an annual magazine of its





*Aikins House and Junior School, no date, BHA*



*Gym class at Riverbend School in 1938, BHA*



*Unnamed students, September 1931, BHA*



*Carla Lehman, 1931 at Riverbend,  
courtesy of Roberta (Lee) Turner*



*Teachers 1931. Back row (left to right): Miss Vaux, Miss Lee, Miss Gregory, Miss McKibbon, Margaret Fairbairn, Miss Neil, Miss Matheson, Miss Anson; Front row: Miss MacKereth, Miss Cull, Miss Foster (Headmistress), Miss Amies, Mrs. Dempsey, BHA*





*Kindergarten class, 1937, BHA*

## Riverbend Tunics

*Regular 5.95!*

*Personal Shopping Only!*

**4.95**

"Honor quality" botany serge tunics—and a "lesson in economics" for mothers! Wide skirts with deep stitched pleats, regulation sash. Sizes 6 to 20 years.



*Newspapers advertisement, 1937, BHA*

activities and chose *Vox Fluminis* "Voice of the River" as its name.<sup>140</sup>

By 1931, the staff numbered 16 and was to be increased in preparation for the 1932-1933 year. It was felt that additional students would enrol because Winnipeg's public schools had decided to charge a fee for students wishing to take Grade XII.<sup>141</sup>

Apparently the hard work of the Board of Governors, staff, administration and parents paid off. The Public School Inspector made a visit in June of 1931 and exclaimed "that the school had the finest Grade 8 he had ever seen."<sup>142</sup>



*Miss J. May Carter, Principal of Riverbend School, 1935 from Vox Fluminis, 1935, p. 4, BHA*

*Jessie May Carter was born in Dublin, Ireland in 1882 and attended small private schools there, attending finishing school in Leipzig, Germany. She graduated from the University of Leeds, finishing her post-graduate work at the University of Caen, France with honors in modern languages. Deciding that office work appealed to her, she took a year of business courses but on a visit to her sister in Edmonton in 1921, she was offered the assistant principal position at St. Hilda's Girls' School in Calgary. She remained there for thirteen years before accepting the job of principal of Riverbend School in 1934. After the creation of Balmoral Hall School in 1950, Miss Carter took the position of Dean at the Ontario Ladies' College in Whitby, Ontario until her retirement in 1960. She died in Kingston, Ontario in 1984.*

Shirley Swail, Grade XI student, writing in Vox Fluminis, 1945, p. 25, BHA Scrapbooks; and Winnipeg Free Press, June 2, 1934.





*Top Above: Unnamed students on Riverbend School lawn, BHA*

*Above: Unnamed students, Riverbend School, BHA*

*Top Left: Chemistry class in new lab in the basement of the Red House, 1937.*

*Left to right: Violet Lindal, Miss McDougall, Jean Vinson, Margaret Graban, Judy Bennett, Marjorie Gardiner, Ruth Rich, BHA*

*Middle Left: Class, 1937. Left to right: -, Jean McFarlane, Emily Hayes, Nora Donnelly, Miss Sheffield, Mary Rose McKenzie, Anne Shaw, Mary Raikes, Phyllis Bacon, BHA*

*Bottom Left: Cramped quarters in the library, 1937. Left to right: Iris Norman, Miss Gregory, Julia Dale, Marjorie Gardiner, Betty Morton, Ruth Rich, Fern Lount, Barbara Colyer, BHA*

*"I was walking outside in our beautiful grounds and I felt then, as I know you all feel and as many visitors have told me, how lucky we are to have such a lovely home — for surroundings do make a great difference to one's happiness and well-being."*



*Beneden Girls who attended Riverbend School, January 1941. Back row (l to r): Patricia Northcote, Jane Swithinbank, Penelope Hodgson, Anne Kingsley, Diana Hanbury, Rosa Rayner; Front row: Valery Rayner, Carol Lockhart, Mary Weiner, Miss Bell, Shirley Rooper, Marigold Mann, BHA*

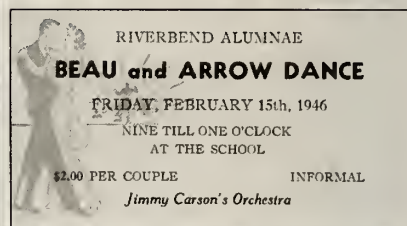
October 1933 saw the introduction of the House system at Riverbend, named after three early fur trading forts in Manitoba — Garry, York and Douglas. A fourth house, Nelson, was created in 1937 in response to the growing student population.<sup>143</sup> The school appeared to be weathering the global financial storm, although its yearly operating deficit during the 1930s would create problems in the future. At the end of the 1933-1934 school year, Principal Foster resigned to pursue post-graduate work in history. Her replacement was Miss Jessie May Carter, who would guide the school through the rest of its existence as Riverbend.

Miss Carter brought enthusiasm to her position and many traditions of Riverbend were started in her early years. The first Christmas carol concert was presented in 1935,<sup>144</sup> Miss Carter hosted a senior dance in February, another innovation.<sup>145</sup> Riverbend's

close ties with the Girl Guides began in the fall of 1935: the 27-member 65<sup>th</sup> Guide Company was organized.<sup>146</sup> The expansion of the library continued to be a major concern; the Alumnae Association gave a tea in February 1935 to "replenish the school library."<sup>147</sup> Together with other donations and events, the library stood at 1,200 books by 1941.<sup>148</sup> An annual swim meet at the Y.W.C.A. was organized in the spring of 1937 and horse-riding lessons were to be made available as well.<sup>149</sup> That year, 12 students graduated Grade XI and 8 from Grade XII.<sup>150</sup>

During the summer of 1937, a new chemistry laboratory was built in the basement of the Red House, which generated much excitement for the senior students.<sup>151</sup> Even more exciting were the new uniforms and school crest that were introduced at the beginning of the 1937-1938 year to the 160 students enrolled.





Top Left: Drawing room, Aikins House, ca.1940, BHA

Top Right: Required Initiation Day outfits for day (left: dunce caps one and one-half feet tall with their name written on it and a boot-blackening kit) and night (right: pajamas, bathing suit, clothespins in hair, cold cream on face). From *The Eagle*, 1941, p. 35, BHA

Middle Right: Ticket for Beau and Arrow Dance (Riverbend Alumnae), February 15, 1946, BHA

Bottom Right: "A Christmas Carol" with Marion Anderson (Scrooge) and Shirley Frogley (Marley), December 17, 1945, BHA

Above: Riverbend School laboratory, basement of the Red House, no date, BHA

"A spring rain was beginning to fall as a party of Riverbend 'old girls' met at the school gate on the afternoon of April 29th, in response to an invitation from Miss Foster to have tea with her and talk over plans for forming an Alumnae organization...after some exciting voting we found that Jean MacPherson was our President and Jean McLean our Secretary. It was agreed that Alumnae meetings be held once a month. A basketball team is being arranged."

Jean MacPherson, *Vox Fluminis*, 1932, p. 4





Left: Riverbend graduation, 1947, Mrs. R.F. McWilliams (middle) and Principal J.M. Carter (left), PAM, R.F. McWilliams Collection #110

Above: Grade 12 graduating class, June 1950. Seated are Principal E.M. Bartlett (left) and Miss Beverley Sharman (right), BHA



Beau and Arrow Dance, Feb. 17, 1950, in Vox Fluminis, 1950, p. 23, BHA



*Duties of Prefects, 1932:*

1. a) *Order in the lines going to prayer*

b) *Late comers to fall in after Grade XI, and not go into line with their own classes. Leave books downstairs*

c) *Putting down of benches for prayers*

d) *Supervision of the hall after prayers*

2. a) *Keeping order during milk and biscuits period.*

*No carrying biscuits upstairs*

3. a) *Order in the wash-rooms [sic] — particularly at*

*1 o'clock. Grades IX and XI to use upstairs wash-rooms.*

b) *Order in the lines going into the dining room at lunch time*

c) *Leaving the dining room in order; going out by tables, commencing at those nearest to the door, and leaving the middle tables till the end. (Miss McKibbin to remain with prefect in charge of this duty until such time as the students have become thoroughly familiar with the procedure and are carrying it out satisfactorily).*

d) *Taking of study in Grade XI.*

4. a) *Order in the cloak-rooms, including drying-room.*

b) *Order at 5 o'clock — prefect on duty.*

*Mistress on duty till 5.15 p.m.*

*Privileges: Sitting in separate place in*

*Gymnasium at prayers.*

*Leaving gymnasium first after prayers.*

*Study in the library.*

*Insignia of office — pin.*

*Privilege of going out alone if back before 3.30 o'clock.*

*Giving out of notices at prayers.*

*Reading of lessons.*

The Alumnae Association continued its work for the school: providing the Head Girl's pin and prefect pins in 1936; donating a radio/phonograph in 1937; and a silver tea service to Miss Carter in 1939 (still in use in Aikins House).<sup>152</sup> The Carnegie Foundation donated 600 records to the school. In response, a new music club was organized, meeting every Wednesday from 2-4 p.m. and every second and fourth Tuesday from 8-9 p.m.

The late 1930s saw the school's population rise to unprecedented levels. In June 1938, the school saw its largest-ever graduating class, 33 from Grade XI and four from Grade XII<sup>153</sup>. The start of World War II did not decrease numbers substantially, in fact, just as had occurred at Rupert's Land College, a group of evacuated English students from Beneden School spent several years at Riverbend. The girls arrived with their teacher, Miss Mary C. Bell, for school in September 1940, most returned in 1941 and Miss Bell became a regular staff member (she would finally return home in June 1943).<sup>154</sup>

The school's war effort included knitting by students and the salvaging of rubber, tin foil, buttons, newspaper and other items. The school offered taxi service to all because of the possibility of gas rationing, the oil furnaces were converted to coal, and the daily schedule was amended to start later and end earlier to help students avoid streetcar rush hour problems. Because many Winnipeg school gymnasiums had been taken over by the military for training, Riverbend offered its facility to outside students. Given the difficulty of finding material, summer uniforms were replaced by plain summer dresses in 1943 (the difficulty in finding grey flannel for winter uniforms was also a constant problem during the War).<sup>155</sup> The graduates of 1943 were perhaps the most significantly affected, they were asked not to wear the traditional long white dresses. As one observer commented, "We're a little sad over the passing of the long white dress for graduation day. Not that we



Top: Christmas dinner 1937, BHA

Middle: Dorm room, Red House, 1937, BHA

Bottom: Dorm room, 3rd floor, White House, 1937, BHA

*"As is customary, the weatherman cast aside his witchcraft and presented a spring day to be dreamt about. The whole day was a dream to be remembered. Graduation day to some is perhaps but an annual event but to those who are experiencing the limelight of the occasion it is one of those glowing events of a lifetime. There is, during the whole day, excitement enthroned in each graduate's heart, but always there steals through the melancholy thought that school days are to become but a memory."*

B.D., Vox Fluminis, 1943, p. 6

wouldn't be proud of a graduate in any dress, but it does seem tough on the 1943s."<sup>156</sup>

Two events that illustrated Riverbend School's maturity: an original graduate, Miss Hope Rutherford, became the school's secretary; and Winnifred Ruth McIntyre, the first name on the school's first roll of 1929 (Kindergarten) was chosen its Head Girl in 1940.<sup>157</sup>

Riverbend School, in spite of all its activities and groups, its high enrollment (boarder candidates were turned away because of overcrowding in 1945)<sup>158</sup> and well-maintained facilities, was not performing well financially. By the end of the 1943 school year, the institution had run up an operating deficit of \$78,000. This accumulated debt was retired by donations of \$11,000 by friends and \$67,000 by Board of Governor Chairman G.H. Aikins. It was, in a sense, a parting gift from the man who was most responsible for the creation and continuation of Riverbend. A year later, Aikins announced his resignation as Chairman of the Board of Governors, cutting his official ties with the school.<sup>159</sup>

The 1944-1945 year saw the adoption of *Ad Meliora*, "To Better Things" as the school's motto. It aptly reflected the mood of the world that, after the end of the War, it was time to work towards a real peace and a better world.

The period 1945-49 saw a deepening of the financial problems for the school. Although the operating deficit of the early 1940s had been retired, the combination of mortgage payments and high operating costs, including city taxes on the large property, made for a cloudy future. Early in 1948, the Governors decided to make an



appeal to parents and alumnae in an attempt to pay off the mortgage and the accumulated debt — approximately \$60,000. Five Governors and two others donated \$7,100 but only \$75 in additional funds were raised.<sup>160</sup> It was a defining moment for the school. The Governors realized that the Riverbend simply could not continue as it was and that outside help was essential. At the same time, the school witnessed a substantial drop in its student population. From turning away boarder applicants in 1945, the enrollment for the 1949-1950 school year totalled only 87, a drop of 40 from the previous year.<sup>161</sup>

The response of the Board of Governors was to organize a meeting between Finance Committee

Chairman Culver Riley and Board member J.A. MacAulay and United Church officials in Toronto in November 1949. The pair asked the Church for financial help in the form of annual grants to the school. But after some discussion, the Church replied that it simply did not have the financial wherewithal to make annual contributions to schools. The Church was willing to increase the school's mortgage, but the Board felt the School's long-term financial stability would not have been improved by this action.<sup>162</sup>

Early in 1950, a committee of the Board of Governors made, what for them must have been, a very difficult decision. They decided to meet with representatives of Rupert's Land School to negotiate an amalgamation.

# THE FOUNDING OF BALMORAL HALL SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

## Rupert's Land Girls' School

WINNIPEG



## Distribution of Prizes

THURSDAY, JUNE 15th, 1950

8:15 p.m.



### PROGRAMME

CHAIRMAN—MR. R. H. G. BONNYCASTLE

"O CANADA"

SCHOOL HYMN

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>1. O God our help in ages past,<br/>Our hope for years to come,<br/>Our shelter from the stormy blast,<br/>And our eternal home.</p> <p>2. Beneath the shadow of Thy throne,<br/>Thy saints have dwelt secure;<br/>Sufficient is Thine arm alone,<br/>And our defence is sure.</p> <p>3. Before the hills in order stood,<br/>Or earth received her frame,<br/>From everlasting Thou art God,<br/>To endless years the same.</p> | <p>4. A thousand ages in Thy sight<br/>Are like an evening gone;<br/>Short as the watch that ends the night<br/>Before the rising sun.</p> <p>5. Time like an ever-rolling stream,<br/>Bears all its sons away;<br/>They fly forgotten as a dream<br/>Dies at the opening day.</p> <p>6. O God, our help in ages past,<br/>Our hope for years to come,<br/>Be Thou our guard while life shall last,<br/>And our eternal home.—Amen.</p> |
|---|---|

PRAYER—REV. CANON STUART H. BROWNLEE

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

PRESENTATION OF PRIZES—DR. MARGARET McWILLIAMS

PRESENTATION OF PIN TO RETIRING HEAD GIRL

SCHOOL SONG

SCHOOL SONG

Alta Petens, fine traditions, love of what  
is right,  
Your noble aims, fair play in games,  
Teach us to seek the right,  
And when we leave your shelter  
In life to take our stand,  
May each girl throughout her life  
Be guided by the light  
The light of Rupert's Land.

GOD SAVE THE KING

## Balmoral Hall

### CLOTHING LIST FOR BOARDERS

- 2 Grey School Tunics — Except Grade XII
- 2 Grey Flannel Pleated Skirts for Grade XII
- 4 Grey Uniform Blouses
- 1 White Uniform Blouse
- 1 Green School Blazer
- 3 Prs. Green Woven Bloomers
- 4 Prs. Grey Stockings (lisle, wool)
- 2 Prs. Green Knee Socks
- 3 Prs. White Ankle Socks
- 1 School Tie (procurable at School)
- 1 Pr. Green Gym. Shorts
- 1 Pr. Black flat-heeled Oxfords
- 1 Pr. Dress Shoes
- 1 Pr. White Running Shoes
- 1 Pr. White Saddle Shoes or White Bucks
- 1 Pr. Rubbers to fit Oxfords
- 1 Pr. Overshoes
- 1 Pr. Gloves
- 1 Green Beret (procurable at School)
- 3 Prs. of Pyjamas
- 1 Dressing Gown
- 1 Pr. Bedroom Slippers
- 4 Sets of Underwear
- 3 Bath Towels
- 3 Face Cloths
- 2 Laundry Bags
- 1 Shoe Bag
- 1 Fitted Sewing Basket or Bag
- 1 Brush and Comb
- 1 Clothes Brush
- 1 Nail Brush, 1 Nail File
- 1 Cash Box
- 1 Top Blanket or Rug

### SUGGESTIONS

- 3 Cotton Dresses
- 1 Afternoon Dress for Sunday (not jumper with blouse)
- 1 Party Dress
- 1 Cloth Skirt (Seniors)
- 1 Woollen Dress (Juniors)
- 2 Sweaters
- 1 Raincoat
- 1 Lightweight Coat for Spring and Autumn — (full length, not bright colours)
- 1 Warm Winter Coat — (preferably grey or green)
- 1 Felt Hat
- Gloves—1 Pr. White gloves for concerts

**EVERYTHING**, including shoes, brushes, shoe bag and luggage must  
be distinctly marked with owner's name.

Uniform can be procured at The T. Eaton Company, Limited or at The  
Hudson's Bay Company.

*The front cover from the final graduation ceremony  
programme at Rupert's Land School, June 15, 1950, BHA*

By the late 1940s, Rupert's Land School was fairing little better than Riverbend. While its enrollment was much larger, it had, for over a decade, been actively pursuing a new facility as its buildings continued to deteriorate. The strain on the budget was immense and the school was running deficits even though, as Board members from Riverbend liked to point out, Rupert's Land was exempt from paying city taxes because of its affiliation with St. John's College, a religious institution.<sup>163</sup>

The two groups began the delicate negotiations early in 1950. Many items had to be resolved: staffing, calculating assets, curriculum and even a

*List of requirements for students at the soon to open Balmoral  
Hall School for Girls, 1950, BHA*

name. Both institutions brought with them considerable history and tradition and it would prove to be a subtle balancing act to ensure the new entity could survive the early years.

The final proposal agreed to use the Riverbend site for the new school. Because of the need for increased dormitory space, funds, approximately \$60,000, from the sale of the Rupert's Land property would be used to construct a new facility.<sup>164</sup>

The situation was summed up by Riverbend's principal, Miss Carter: "It is sad that by reason of our declining enrollment, it was found impossible to carry on alone, and the amalgamation of the two





*Gwendolyn Murrell-Wright was born in Toronto in 1908, the daughter of a clergyman. She received her B.A. from the University of Toronto and at the age of 27, she became a teacher at Bishop Strachan School for Young Ladies in Toronto. She would remain there until her move to Balmoral Hall except for the years 1941 and 1942 when she was the assistant principal at St. Helen's School in Dunham, Quebec. She left Balmoral Hall School after the 1966 school year, one of the school's longest serving heads.*

Winnipeg Tribune, June 3, 1950

Protestant Schools of Winnipeg, Riverbend and Rupert's Land, will ensure the continuance of a good school in the Protestant Faith."<sup>165</sup> Time was of the essence, many decisions rested on the approval of the scheme. Parents and teachers at Riverbend grew anxious in March, when the Riverbend staff informed Miss Carter that unless an agreement was reached by April 1st, they would seek employment elsewhere. Parents held an emergency meeting on April 1st because the St. John's College board had informed Riverbend officials that their final approval had to wait at least two more weeks.<sup>166</sup>

In the end, the two sides did agree to the

amalgamation, the two churches would run the institution through a Board of Governors. As plans solidified, nature threw the Boards a curve in May. The 1950 flood caused devastation throughout southern Manitoba and across Winnipeg. At Rupert's Land Ladies' College, they were forced to dig a trench in the back lane to save the basement dining room from complete ruin.<sup>167</sup> At Riverbend, there was three feet of water in the basement<sup>168</sup> and the flood meant the postponement of construction plans for an addition to the school.<sup>169</sup>

In June, Miss Gwendolyn Murrell-Wright was chosen new principal and one would be hard pressed

*"There is a fire escape [on the White House] that goes up past our Headmistress' drawing room and then to the third floor where our dorms were. Several of our friends, boys, would come and visit us. Now boys on the campus were a no-no but still they came and sat and chatted with us on the fire escape and we always thought Miss Murrell-Wright never, ever knew about it. But on the very last night, I guess a night or two before grad, they all came up. As they were tip toeing down the fire escape, Miss Murrell-Wright opened her window and said 'Goodnight Michael, goodnight Matthew, goodnight Jamie,' so she knew all along. One of those boys happened to end up being my husband!"*

Alumnae remembering her graduating year, 1963,  
in interview with Grade XI student Mhelanni Gorre, April 5, 2000.



*Drawing room in Aikins House, ca.1950, BHA*



*Left to right: Ian Jessiman, member of the Board of Governors, Miss Sharman (teacher), Miss Murrell-Wright (Head of School), Wing Commander John Klaponski (RCAF 17 Wing Auxiliary) and Robert Gemmel, superintendent of government buildings for the Province of Manitoba. Opening of the 1902 cornerstone of Havergal College, Carlton Street, reported in Winnipeg Free Press, June 1, 1964, BHA*

to have made a better decision in the circumstances. Miss Murrell-Wright was put in the unenviable position of creating a unified institution out of two long-time rivals. She possessed the strength of character and discipline necessary for the tough battles, the intelligence to continue to build on the academic excellence of both schools, and a deep love for her students.<sup>170</sup>

By June 22nd, a name for the new institution had not been chosen, but the choice had been narrowed down to four: Balmoral House, Hudson Hall, Fort



Garry and Assiniboine. The decision of the new Board, reached by ballot, was Balmoral Hall. The name honoured Balmoral Castle, the Scottish home of the British Royal Family. It was also in June that Miss Murrell-Wright had made it quite clear in a newspaper interview that she was a ‘principal’ not a ‘headmistress’ reflecting the more modern views of the school’s new leader.<sup>171</sup>

When the school opened on September 8, 1950, there was an enrollment of 190 students, with staff from both former schools and some new faces. The school population was divided into four groups, known as Houses 1- 4. It was not until early in 1951 that voting by the students actually named these houses - Braemar (the parish near Balmoral Castle),

Craig Gowan (a nearby hill), Glen Gairn (glen near the castle) and Ballater (railway station nine miles west of the castle).<sup>172</sup>

Students were also consulted about a new crest and motto. The crest was designed with an eagle (a symbol from Rupert’s Land) and the river and pillars (from Riverbend) and the motto *meliora petens* “Seeking better things.” As Miss Murrell-Wright observed, “In September you will be wearing this crest with its eagle to give you courage, its pillars to fill you with a desire for wider knowledge, its river to remind you of your beautiful surroundings and symbolizing the ever moving life-stream within this school, and your motto to inspire you at all times to be SEEKING BETTER THINGS.”<sup>173</sup>

## THE EVOLUTION OF BALMORAL HALL SCHOOL

The 1950 fees charged for boarders at the new school ranged from \$725 for Grade I students to \$800 from Grades X to XII. By the following year, these had risen dramatically to \$1,000 for the upper grades. Day pupils in 1951 were charged from \$150 for Kindergarten students to \$350 for Grades IX to XII.<sup>174</sup>

It was shortly after the formation of Balmoral Hall School that a long-time relationship between the school and the Royal Winnipeg Ballet began. Headmistress Miss Murrell-Wright was in Banff, Alberta when she met Gweneth Lloyd and Betty Farrally, the women responsible for the formation of the Canadian School of Ballet. The school became

the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, the oldest company in Canada and second oldest in North America. The pair was running the Banff Ballet School, a summer program for promising students and Miss Murrell-Wright offered to include ballet in the school's curriculum in the fall. The offer was accepted and several dancers enrolled at Balmoral Hall School. This began many years of close contact between the two institutions, including the use of the Balmoral Hall gymnasium as a practice hall for the ballet and later, when the company's residential facilities were sold, the students were given space in the school's residence as a temporary solution. In 1988, the school entered into an agreement with the Royal



*Winter outing, Balmoral Hall School, ca.1950, BHA*





*Left to right: Johanne Wintemute, Balmoral Hall's first Head Girl (1950-1951), Cathy Young, second Head Girl (1951-1952) and Headmistress Gwendolyn Murrell-Wright, 1951, BHA*

Winnipeg Ballet to allow 17 girls from grades VII to XII to attend and live at Balmoral Hall while devoting much of their time to their dancing.<sup>175</sup>

Although enrollment shrank over the first few years, plans were made for new buildings with a price tag of \$125,000. As usual, innovative ways were employed by the Mothers' Auxiliary and others to raise money. A Christmas Village was organized in November 1954 that included a buffet dinner and a senior student dance at Aikins House. The profit from this event was \$6,000. The Auxiliary also organized the "Good Ship Balmoral" fundraiser in February 1954 including the 'Buoys and Belles' smorgasbord and dance. It was a huge success and raised over \$2,000. With private donations and contributions from alumnae and parents, calls for tenders for the new senior school were made in early 1955.

On December 20, 1955, Dr. W.C. Lockhart, principal of United College (University of Winnipeg),



*Balmoral Hall's first Student Council, 1950-1951, BHA*

cut the ribbon officially opening the new building. The new facility boasted a science laboratory, home economics room, a day student common room, locker rooms, offices, staff room and an art room on the ground floor and six classrooms for Grades VII to XII, the principal's office, a general office and a senior student library on the second floor. It was attached to the west end of Aikins House by an enclosed walkway.<sup>176</sup>

When it was decided in 1956 that a new organ was necessary, students and the Auxiliary organized to sell parts of an organ. For \$3 you received a G-chord, a clarion cost 50¢.<sup>177</sup> Once again, this Mothers' Auxiliary initiative was a resounding success.

Balmoral Hall, by the late 1950s, was in stable financial shape. It had, for several years, an operating surplus and at closing exercises in June 1958, Principal Murrell-Wright announced that enrollment for the 1959-1960 school year had already surpassed classroom space.<sup>178</sup> A Valentine Dance,



*Winter outing, Balmoral Hall School, ca.1950, BHA*

Cupid Capers, was held at the school for the first time in “some years” in 1958, with Miss Murrell-Wright acting as hostess.<sup>179</sup>

The decade of the 1960s saw many changes at the school, including the expansion of the facilities. It began with a somber note, Principal Murrell-Wright was absent due to illness from September 1959 to Easter of 1960, Miss Beverley Sharman capably filling in.<sup>180</sup>

In November 1960, ground was broken on the next major expansion project. The new facility would contain classroom space for nursery school, Kindergarten and Grade I on the first floor, residential space for 60 in two-, three- and four-student rooms on the second and third floors, and “at last” a fireplace “where everyone can enjoy fireside chats in the drawing-room.” There was also a large dining-hall (seating 120) and a new kitchen so day-girls would not have to spend lunch hour in “Science

Laboratory, Kindergarten or the common room.”<sup>181</sup>

As part of the project, the Red House was demolished in early November 1960.<sup>182</sup> The residents were moved into the White House, taking up space wherever they could. The new building was named Dalton House after the original headmistress of Havergal College. It was officially opened by Lieutenant Governor Errick F. Willis on September 22, 1961<sup>183</sup> and was attached to the second floor of the Senior wing by a glass passage. As part of the project, Mrs. G.H. Aikins graciously underwrote the interior and exterior renovations of the White House, which was officially renamed Aikins House. The home now featured the Junior School French class in the old kitchen, a common room in the dining room and the music room.<sup>184</sup>

Other changes at the school include the naming of the yearbook, *Optima Anni* “The Best Things of the Year,” beginning with the 1961 edition.<sup>185</sup> The first





*Left: Home Economics Room, 1953, BHA*

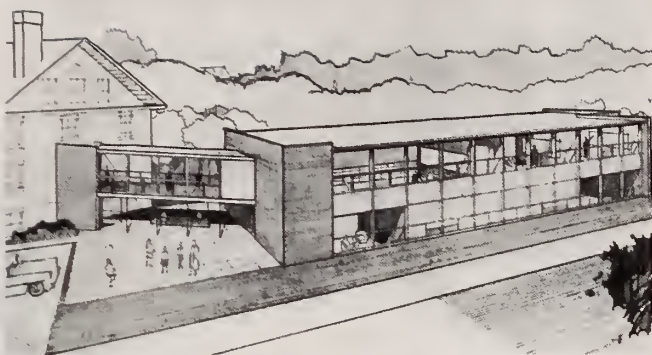
*Below; Good Ship Balmoral fund raiser, February 1954, BHA*



*"Ever since I have been in Grade One at Balmoral Hall, I have always admired our School organist and yearned to be one of them. My enthusiasm increased when the new organ was purchased in 1959 and I bought my 'keys' to assist in paying for it. Finally after ten years of impatient waiting, I had an audition. When I qualified, I started a number of Saturday morning practice sessions and was soon assigned a morning to play for Prayers. It was with considerable trepidation that I took my position at the organ, but once I began to play, it was a thrill to hear the whole school singing and following my lead..."*

Vicki Griffiths, Form IV, 1965, Optima Anni, 1965, p. 15





*Top Left: Architect's drawing of Balmoral Hall Senior School, 1955, BHA*

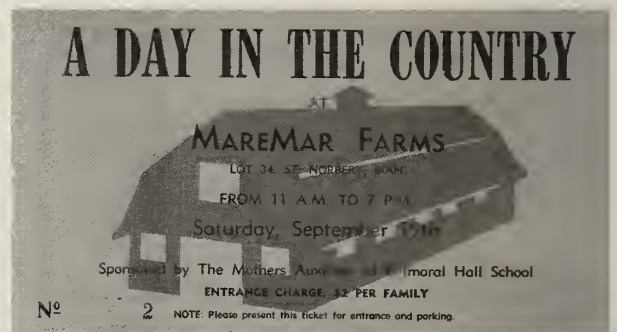
*Middle Left: Opening of the Senior School Building, December 1955. Left to right: Mr. and Mrs. Sellers, Dr. Lockhart, Miss Murrell-Wright, BHA*

*Top Right: Fundraising for a new organ by selling organ parts, 1956, BHA*

*Middle Right: Glen Gairn House, ca.1955, BHA*

*Bottom: Day student common room in new Senior School Building, ca.1956, BHA*





*Above: Ticket for "A Day in the Country" fundraiser, September 19, 1963, BHA*

*Top: Cupid's Ball at Balmoral Hall, February 13, 1959, in 1950 scrapbook.*

*Left: Dorm room in Aikins House, 3rd floor, 1959, BHA*

'Day in the Country,' when students were given the opportunity to visit a farm, was organized by the Mothers' Auxiliary in the fall of 1963.<sup>186</sup> It was also at the start of the 1963 school year that the school adopted a new uniform that is still in use today. The

uniform has always been, since the founding of the schools, a topic of much debate and has been at various times a source of pride, annoyance and a great deal of 'unofficial' alteration.





*Top Left: Demolition of the Red House, November 1960, BHA*

*Top Right: Sale of Red House brick as fundraiser, 1961, BHA*

*Middle: Balmoral Hall School (Red House now replaced by Dalton House), 1961, BHA*

*Bottom Left: On the way to the morning prayers, 1961, Optima Anni, 1961, p. 16, BHA*

*Right Bottom: Ribbon cutting at Dalton House by Left to right: Hon. Errick Willis, Mrs. Willis, Miss Muriel-Wright, September 22, 1961, BHA*





*Dining room at Dalton House, ca.1965, BHA*



*Sitting room in Residence, "The Blue Room," Dalton House, ca.1965, BHA*



*Bed room in Dalton House, ca.1965, BHA*

*"We won't forget this year. Boarders, do you remember packing up and leaving the Red House? And then remember that busy noon hour when everyone helped to move the remainder of the furniture to the lawn outside the White House? We moved out with light hearted abandon, but we shared several moments of sadness as the old Red House was demolished so ruthlessly, and as those lovely birch trees one by one were felled."*

Principal G. Murrell-Wright in Optima Anni, 1961, p. 7

## UNIFORMS<sup>187</sup>

The original 1901 'uniform' at Havergal College (the girls wore what most school girls wore in those days) was a light-coloured blouse and long, dark skirt. The tunic found its way into the uniform in the 1920s. In 1930, new outfits were created for Rupert's Land, a "Rupe green" tunic, fawn blouse, blazer, black and yellow tie, brown shoes and stockings and a green beret.<sup>188</sup> This would, with some modification, remain the Rupert's Land uniform until amalgamation in 1950. These new uniforms were not universally accepted, as one student wrote:

*We were all very much pleased this year to turn out in beautiful new uniforms... We must admit, however, that there are two serious faults to be found with the new uniform, and something really must be done about*



*Riverbend class, 1931. Back row (left to right): Sheelagh Cooney, Jane Ryan, Andrey Ross, Kay Young, Kay Cork; Front row: Grace Sellers, Verna Henning, Dorothy Creelman, BHA*



*Grade XII class, Rupert's Land College, 1936 with the uniform adopted in 1931, BHA*





*Riverbend students wearing their new uniforms on the main staircase of Aikins House, ca.1940, BHA*



*Students at Riverbend School, ca.1948 (new uniforms), BHA*

*it... We realized with horror on the first day of term that we could no longer use the inside hems of our tunics for pen wipers! The ink didn't match! What could be done about it? Well, for the first few months we solved the problem. There were still six or eight people in every room with their old blue tunics, so we divided these people very carefully so that there was one blue tunic to five green ones... One by one, however, the Blues have been won over*



*Juniors going home, 1957 in Balmoral Hall Year Book, 1957, p. 23, BHA*



*Head Girl Cathy Young and student Sandra Vincent, Riverbend, 1952 showing uniform with cord, Balmoral Hall Yearbook 1952, p. 6, BHA*

*to the side of the Greens, and as the last of that strange race is now extinct we are literally at our wits' end to know what to do.*

*The other defect of our uniform also concerns ink. We find it impossible anywhere in town to obtain brown ink to match our stockings. Last year, if any one had a hole in her heel, it was a very easy matter to apply a little ink to the affected part and no one would be the wiser.<sup>189</sup>*

The original uniform for the newly created Riverbend School was 'two blues' (a blue tunic and blue "regulation" blouse) with a crest showing the river between the schools initials.<sup>190</sup> In 1937, Mrs. D.F. McIntyre suggested and produced the first prototype of the school's new uniform — the oxford grey tunic, scarlet tie and blazer (although the original summer uniform remained unchanged until 1938).<sup>191</sup> The crest was also altered, with the river, white pillars and a seagull designed by Mr. Douglas MacKay and Mr. P.J. Edgar.<sup>192</sup>



*New summer uniforms, Balmoral Hall Yearbook, 1959, p13, BHA*

By 1942, the students were wearing coloured sashes as identification: York House, yellow; Nelson House, blue; Garry House, red; and Douglas House, green.<sup>193</sup> At Rupert's Land, the ties were used to signify the different houses — the width of the black stripe indicating the specific House.

With amalgamation came the need to find a compromise, like everything else at the school. Rupert's Land contributed the style of tunic, Riverbend the colour. The result was a grey tunic, pearl grey blouse, grey stockings (green knee socks in fall and spring), black oxfords and a green blazer with school crest. The students chose green school ties.<sup>194</sup>

Although these new uniforms were chosen and ordered, delays in their shipment meant they would not arrive in the city in time for the official opening of Balmoral Hall on September 8, 1950. Miss Murrell-Wright wrote to the parents and advised them that the former school uniforms were not to be worn and that a white or light-coloured cotton blouse and skirt, with black, flat-heeled oxfords would be appropriate.<sup>195</sup> In 1959, new summer dresses were designed for students.

It appears that the longest standing tradition in regard to uniforms is the white dress of varying





*Balmoral Hall uniforms, 1963, BHA*

lengths for closing exercises in June.<sup>196</sup> This was constant at all three schools with a few notable exceptions. In 1961, there was a move to have green dresses for closing exercises. But “since fewer than 25% of the parents requested green dresses, and since those requesting white feel keenly about white for this occasion, it would seem unwise to make any changes.”<sup>197</sup> The Class of 1996, after much debate, voted to wear caps and gowns for closing exercises, but by the next year, the white gowns had returned.<sup>198</sup>

In the fall of 1963, the grey and green was replaced by green and white in the form of a kilt (replacing the tunic) and a grey or white shirt for everyday wear or for special occasions, respectively. The green blazer remained unchanged. Ancient Hunting McLean was chosen as the tartan for the new uniforms. Even plaid slacks made a brief appearance in the mid-1970s as part of the uniform. Tan coloured shorts were introduced as part of the summer uniform in the early 1990s along with green polo shirts.<sup>199</sup>

Of course, when the thrill of wearing the school uniform had worn off, the school offered “Mufti



*Balmoral Hall School's new tartan uniforms, 1963, Optima Anni, 1963, p. 4, BHA*

Day” when students could donate to a charity and wear clothes appropriate to a chosen theme.

# THE MODERN BALMORAL HALL SCHOOL

With their new uniforms chosen, the school continued to evolve in the mid- and late-1960s. Miss Murrell-Wright, in recognition of her experience and expertise, was appointed president of the Association of Headmistresses of Canada for 1964.<sup>200</sup> A new fundraising campaign was announced in June of 1965 — the goal was \$350,000 for a new auditorium and classroom space.<sup>201</sup> A year later, the sod was officially turned.<sup>202</sup>

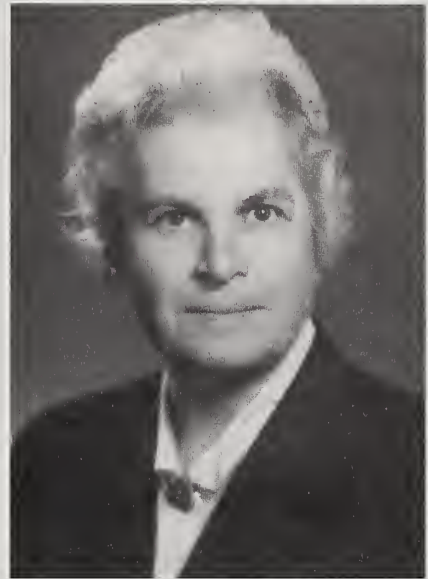
June 1966 saw the retirement of two long-time Balmoral Hall leaders: Miss Sharman had begun her career as a senior science teacher at Rupert's Land College in 1932 and had been acting principal at Balmoral Hall in 1959-1960;<sup>203</sup> and Principal Murrell-Wright.

Dr. Harriet M. Perry was chosen to succeed Miss Murrell-Wright. Dr. Perry was an interesting choice for the school to make: she had very definite views about education and during her tenure introduced a number of reforms to modernize the school. She summed up her six years at Balmoral Hall:

*"In that time [the past six years] the familiar pattern of a British girl's boarding and day school gave way to that of an educational institution with a distinctly Canadian flavour. Much of the traditional classical educational outlook remained but the focus of interest was swinging toward the development of each individual student rather than to the perpetuation of a certain type of girl who was expected to behave according to a pattern defined more than 100 years before."<sup>204</sup>*

Her views were also delineated in 1968 in her introductory words in the first issue of the Balmoral Hall Newsletter:

*Balmoral Hall, considered for many years as a finishing school for girls, has finally achieved its true goal — that of a first rate preparatory school. This has evolved through major changes in the Math and Science courses, the introduction of some bi-lingual classes and a general*



*Dr. Harriet M. Perry was born in Winnipeg in 1914, living in St. Vital most of her life. She graduated from Manitoba Medical College in 1940 and practiced until 1947 when she and her husband, Jack Lederman, began their family. She enrolled her daughter at Balmoral Hall, and soon volunteered to serve on the Staff and Studies Committee (1964-1965). Her outside interests included membership on the Board of Governors of the Winnipeg Art Gallery and the St. Vital and Winnipeg Public libraries. After leaving Balmoral Hall, she continued studies at the University of Manitoba. She died in Vernon, British Columbia on June 20, 2001.*

Balmoral Hall Newsletter, Vol. 13, No. 1 (June 1967) and The Portal, Fall 2001, p. 32.





*Balmoral Hall Blazers, senior basketball team with their new uniforms, 1972. Optima Anni, 1962, n.p., BHA*

*up-grading of the whole curriculum.*<sup>205</sup>

As part of her policy of “child-centred”<sup>206</sup> education, she introduced the concept of a student council shortly after her arrival, which by 1970-1971 was described as “a strong and useful instrument of communication with the Board of Governors.”<sup>207</sup> On May 30, 1968, Richardson Hall was officially opened by alumna Kathleen Richardson (although the senior classes had moved into the space in January).<sup>208</sup> The Hall held a new gymnasium, auditorium, science laboratories, lockers, music rooms, student kitchen and senior common room.<sup>209</sup>

*“At the beginning of the year, seven members of the Library Committee visited the Repair Department of the Winnipeg Public Library. Since then those girls have had ample opportunity to practise what they learnt, in keeping in tact many of the most popular books in the [Senior] Library.”*

Optima Anni, 1963, p. 16

Balmoral Hall was believed to be the first independent school in Canada to adopt the open-area classroom concept in 1969, after having knocked down walls during the summer.<sup>210</sup> The traditional morning prayers were replaced in 1971 with assemblies, “a more relaxed gathering of the girls where one may have expected films, records, witty skits — anything of general interest.”<sup>211</sup> Athletics and physical fitness, two areas which many alumnae recognized as under-emphasized by Miss Murrell-Wright, took on added importance with Dr. Perry. Modern uniforms were purchased and, in the words of the Sports Captain Nancy Lemon, “the beginning of something that should have begun with the birth of Balmoral Hall...proper athletic instruction!”<sup>212</sup> In an inter-house contest, Craig Gowan’s submission of “Blazers” became the new school name.<sup>213</sup>

But while advances were being made on some fronts, there was a disturbing trend that threatened the school’s existence. Enrollment was markedly off by the early 1970s. The yearbooks of this era are full of comments about the lack of students and its affects on school programs and activities. The 1972-1973 year saw less than ten students registered in many grade levels and only 17 boarders in total.<sup>214</sup> It was a difficult time for an ‘establishment’ institution like Balmoral Hall to generate any interest from students wanting to break from the traditional norms. Serious discussions were held at the Board level between Balmoral Hall and St. John’s Ravenscourt regarding the lack of students and the possibility of amalgamation.<sup>215</sup> Instead, the Board of Governors decided to close residence indefinitely and discussions were held to close the Senior School as well (neither action was ever carried out).<sup>216</sup> There was even talk of disbanding the house system because of the small numbers.

One of today’s most cherished traditions actually started during this low period. In 1972, each Grade XI student hand-made a gift for a member of the graduating class. Over the next few years, this activity continued. The gifts varied from year to year,



*R. Martin Kenney was born in Vancouver, British Columbia in 1932, the son of big band leader Mart Kenney. The family moved with Mart Kenney's job to Toronto in 1939. Martin Kenney took his high school at Appleby College, a boys only independent school in Oakville, Ontario. He joined the Air Force and was a jet fighter for seven years. He accepted a teaching position at his old high school in 1962 and was Senior House Master. He was contacted by R.P. Roblin, head of the Board of Governors at Balmoral Hall, to become principal. Although he had no daughters or sisters and had never taught girls, he accepted the*

*offer and his wife's advice to "just teach them like you teach boys." Kenney left the school after only three school years, accepting the position of president at Athol Murray College of Notre Dame in Wilcox, Saskatchewan. He continued there until his retirement in 1992 but then spent the next six years running a school in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. He retired to Nova Scotia in 1998 where he lives with his wife.*

Interview with R. Martin Kenney, November 1, 2001



*Grade I, 1973-1974, Jason Kenney, youngest son of Headmaster R. Martin Kenney, back row far left. Optima Anni, 1974, p. 55, BHA*

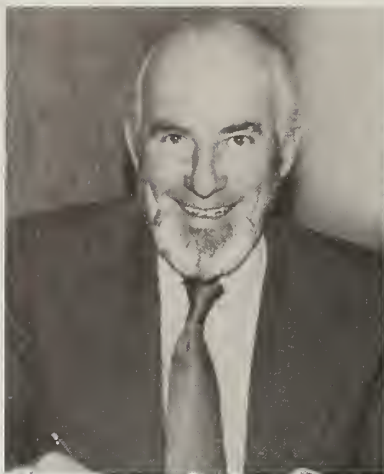
from silver pendants to wall hangings. The students picked their own graduate and the activity was student- rather than faculty-lead. In the mid-1970s, the Grade XI's made personalized dolls, with mixed success. The following year, dolls were again chosen for the gift and the class did an excellent job. After

this success, it has become a yearly tradition to give dolls to the graduating class and Mrs. Teresa Friesen, who has taught at Balmoral Hall since 1972, has been supervising their production ever since.<sup>217</sup>

Dr. Perry resigned from her position as principal effective June 1973 and the Board of Governors hired the school's first male head, R. Martin Kenney (the fourth male principal hired by an all-girl school in Canada that year).<sup>218</sup> Kenney was brought in to bring the enrollment back to workable levels and he was extremely successful. In his three years at the school, Kenney had the enrollment at 300, there were waiting lists in many of the grades and he had succeeded in bringing back some of the pride in the school.

The first year Mr. Kenney, his wife and three sons stayed in the east wing of the top floor of Dalton House while the six Grade XII boarders were located in the west wing. His youngest son, Jason, attended Kindergarten and Grade I at Balmoral Hall.<sup>219</sup> For the second year of their term, the Kenneys stayed in the





*N. Thomas Russell was born and educated in England — grammar school in Devonshire and post-secondary at the University of London, where he received his B.Ed plus a Diploma in English Studies. He also took English Studies and Curriculum Development at the University of East Africa. After teaching in Africa and England, he moved to Québec as the Assistant Headmaster and then the Headmaster of Stanstead College for the eight years prior to his move to Balmoral Hall. He ‘officially’ retired in June 1986 and moved to Victoria, B.C. where he continues to live with his wife, volunteering at Royal Roads University*

*Campus preparing students for examinations and helping them establish good study habits.*

Information supplied by N. Thomas Russell, November 2001



*Welcoming banner for the All Schools Reunion, 1987, BHA*



*Shizuoka Eiwa Jogakium School, Japan, no date, BHA*

renovated Aikins House. Kenney succeeded in raising the enrollment of the school and in June 1976 left for Wilcox, Saskatchewan to assume the presidency of an all boys' school.<sup>220</sup>

His replacement was N. Thomas “Tom” Russell. Living with his wife Janet in Aikins House, he taught all classes to the Senior students during his first year at Balmoral Hall. Before his arrival, Mr. Russell had developed a “Learning How to Learn” course and this was also introduced to the students. After the first year, he delivered a reading skills as well as a study skills course to Grades VII and VIII. He also introduced monthly monitoring of student

performance — “Progress Reports.”

In 1977, the first annual Mother’s Auxiliary Fall Barbecue was held, a tradition still observed.<sup>221</sup> The following year, a short-lived revival of the school paper was circulated, named “Bloomer Rumours.”<sup>222</sup> In 1982, Mr. Russell was chosen chair of the Canadian Association of Independent Schools and Balmoral Hall acted as host for the Association’s annual conference in mid-October. Mr. Russell was overwhelmed with positive remarks about the school:

*How proud you must be!!! You are the Head of a really fine school. In my time as Headmaster, I have visited*



**Balmoral  
Hall**

**Nº 143**

## Maytime with Mart Kenney

\*

SATURDAY, MAY 15, 1976

WINNIPEG CONVENTION CENTRE  
375 YORK AVENUE

Reception: 6:30  
Dinner: 8:00  
Dancing: 9:00 - 1:00

Black Tie Optional  
Silent Auction

Reservations:  
Mrs. V. Horbay - 489-9417  
Mrs. R. P. Purves - 489-6883

\$40.00 per couple  
No Refunds

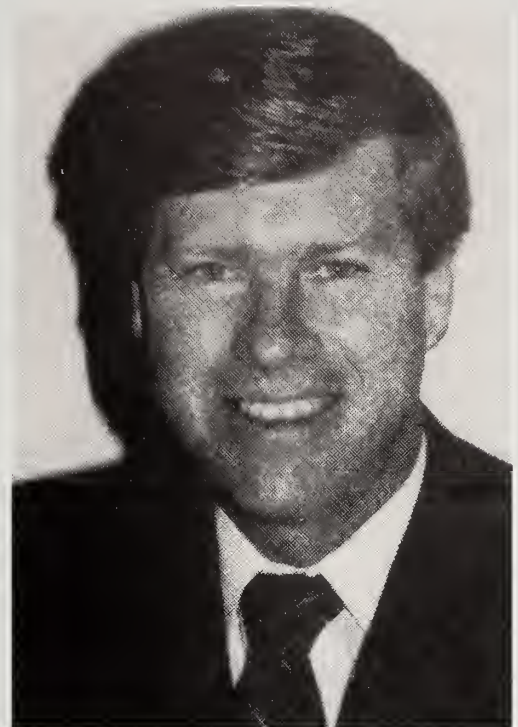
*Ticket to "Maytime with Mart Kenney" fundraiser, May 15, 1976, BHA*

*many schools — many with beautiful buildings and equipment — lovely grounds and great histories, but there was often something missing — warmth and spirit. I don't mean the rah-rah football spirit, because any school can manufacture that... I mean the quiet confidence kids show in themselves and in their school. Your school has that special warmth, that very special spirit, and it shone through in great rays all through the last three days.*<sup>223</sup>

Late in 1984, the school's Board of Governors re-energized the Balmoral Hall Alumnae Association and Linda (Leach) Radcliffe (Balmoral Hall 1963) was appointed its first Alumnae Director, with an office in Aikins House. The school enrollment for the year 1985-1986 was 341 and plans were made to install a computer laboratory during the summer of 1985.<sup>224</sup>

In 1986, the school welcomed a new Head, E.G. "Ted" Staunton. It was his first Headship and he was surprised at the variety of duties for which he was responsible. By the beginning of the 1987-1988 school year, his efforts had succeeded in filling all the spots for boarders.<sup>225</sup> He also helped them settle into the new apartment block, the Garneil, that had been purchased by the school and converted into "The Res," with space for 51 boarder students. The building also provided space for design art, art and photography and home skill classes.

In May 1987, the Alumnae Association held its



*E.G. "Ted" Staunton was born on October 6, 1947 and attended Upper Canada College, an independent all boys school from 1956-1963. He obtained his B.Ed. from the University of Toronto in 1978 and his M.Ed. (Curriculum) in 1985. He taught at Trinity College School in Port Hope, Ontario for 14 years before his move to Winnipeg. Balmoral Hall was Staunton's first Headship and all three of his daughters attended the school. He left after the 1988-1989 year to take the position of Headmaster at Lower Canada College in Montréal, Québec. Since the fall of 1997 he has been the Headmaster at St. Andrew's College in Aurora, Ontario.*

Information courtesy of  
E.G. Staunton, November 2001



first 'All Schools' reunion. It was an extremely successful gathering, of the known alumnae, 33% or 641 attended. A stand of evergreen trees was planted along Langside Street and Westminster Avenue, as a legacy from the Alumnae.<sup>226</sup>

The decade of the 1980s certainly was a turning point for Balmoral Hall. It developed agreements with sister schools from around the world, the closest of which has been with Shizuoka Eiwa Jogakium School of Japan. Japanese school representatives approached Balmoral Hall in 1973, but it wasn't until 1983 that an official agreement was signed. The first contact was between teachers, but in the summer of 1988, 40 Japanese students arrived in Winnipeg.<sup>227</sup> Since then, students from both countries have visited each other, choirs have made trips and students from both schools have studied at the sister school.

Debating, which has grown into one of the school's most impressive and noteworthy activities, traces its original growth in popularity to this decade. In 1986, scholarships named after the founding schools — Havergal, Rupert's Land and Riverbend — and the deceased Heads of School, were instituted by the Alumnae Association. It was also the decade when "the tennis courts lost a courageous battle to the ever-increasing need for more parking space and an expanded entrance to the school".<sup>228</sup>

The success enjoyed by the school during the 1980s led to a discussion about its future and the need for expanded facilities. After studying options including a move to the former Manitoba School for the Deaf on Shaftsbury Boulevard, the decision was made to remain on the original property and embark upon a major renovation/expansion program.

From this debate came, in 1987, a report from the Future Planning Committee (Task Force 2000) on a number of policy goals to take the school into the new millennium. It included the launching of a major, \$2.75-million capital campaign named "Enriching Her Tomorrow."<sup>229</sup> Phase One, the renovation of Junior School and Dalton House, was completed in the summer of 1988. The open-concept classroom area of the Junior School was



*Above: Construction of central section, 1991, BHA*

*Right: Balmoral Hall School, central section complete, 1991, BHA*





*Brian Porter came to Balmoral Hall School from Bermuda High School, an independent girls school, where he had been for five years. Mr. Porter had earned degrees from McGill University and the University of Toronto, as well as Carleton University. He was Head of Secondary School at Selwyn House School in Montréal from 1981-1984. He and his family, wife Jill and children Joan and Margot, occupied Aikins House.*

The Portal, Vol. 2, No. 1 (Fall/winter 1989-1990), p 3

transformed into a Junior Kindergarten and Kindergarten centre. The original gym “complete with initials of students who dared to traverse the precarious beams”<sup>230</sup> remained intact; the six original classrooms became four larger learning spaces. Dalton House was converted from residential space into classrooms for grades I to VI and office space.

Phase Two entailed the construction of “the academic heart of Balmoral Hall.” Magnificent new buildings were constructed and the Senior School was renovated and an additional storey completed. The result was new Junior and Senior computer labs,

a music/drama room, private music rooms, expanded Junior and Senior libraries and a Common Room, all crowned by a glass and steel atrium.

Classroom/laboratory space was also provided for Senior science students.<sup>231</sup> Construction commenced in 1990 and the new building was officially opened by Lieutenant Governor, the Honorable George Johnson, on October 10, 1991.<sup>232</sup>

The final project under the “Enriching Her Tomorrows” umbrella began with the hiring of a Campaign Director in June of 1994 to secure \$2.2-million for construction of a new gymnasium and theatre. In April of 1997, the Board of Governors voted to move forward with construction, although donations and pledges were approximately \$500,000 short of the goal.<sup>233</sup> Construction began in the summer of 1997 and the grand opening for the new facility took place on September 16, 1998. The school now boasted a new technology resource centre, an enlarged athletic centre and a new 205-seat theatre. A new canteen and Student Store were also built.<sup>234</sup>



*Construction of new theatre, 1998, BHA*

While the physical face of the school was changing during the late 1980s and 1990s, this period saw a great many innovations and special occasions.





*Students debating in the classroom, no date, BHA*

Headmaster Staunton left after the 1988-1989 school year, replaced by Brian Porter. In 1988, the first ever World Individual Debate and Public Speaking

*A student entered the office of Principal Kenney: "Mr. Kenney, so-and-so is using bad words." Mr. Kenney: "What did she say?" Student: "Oh, I couldn't tell you, my mom and dad don't like me to use that kind of language." Mr. Kenney- "Of course not, I apologize for asking you to say them." The student thinks for a moment and then says: "I know, you start saying bad words and I'll tell you when you say the right ones."*

Interview with R. Martin Kenney, November 1, 2001

Championships were held. That year, and every year since (with the exceptions of 1992 and 1999), Balmoral Hall has sent at least one student, and sometimes two, to this competition. Other international debating competitions have included a Balmoral Hall student as a member of the 1990 Canadian Team to the World High School Debate Championships, and in 1992, a Balmoral Hall student represented Canada at the English speaking Union Championships in London, England.<sup>235</sup>

In July 1991, Ditte (Lansky) Cloutier (Balmoral Hall 1966) became the first alumna and first woman to ever chair the Board of Governors.<sup>236</sup> The Canadian Educational Standards Institute accredited Balmoral Hall in 1991, the first school in Western Canada to be certified.<sup>237</sup>

In April 1992, Linda (Miller) Martin (Balmoral Hall 1962), Coach of the Balmoral Hall Debating Team, helped organize the inaugural Rupert's Land



*Diane Bieber was born and raised in Winnipeg and graduated from North Dakota State University (Fargo). After having taught in public schools in St. James for eight years, she joined the staff of Balmoral Hall as a Junior School teacher, remaining on staff for the next 17 years. Excelling in her position, she would become Head of Junior School in 1986 and then Head of School. She retired in 1999.*

Information courtesy of D. Bieber, November 2001

Tournament for debaters and public speakers from Western Canada and the Western United States.<sup>238</sup> Also in 1992, the Parent Association (the former Mothers' Auxiliary) opened the Student Store.<sup>239</sup> The next spring, the school was honoured by a visit from His Royal Highness, The Prince Edward, C.V.O., who attended a Gala Dinner (Duke of Edinburgh Awards) at the School on March 26, 1993. The 1990s included the school's annual participation in the Terry Fox Run, Earth Day and an ever-increasing number of community events. There were the musicals, choir performances and art exhibits, as well as Grandparents' Day and other activities intended to raise the contact between the school population and society at large.

May 1992 saw the school, its alumnae, staff, parents and friends celebrating its 90th birthday. With the logo, "The Spirit of Excellence," the school had a daylong party on Friday, May 1st complete with an indoor carnival in the Atrium (candy floss, popcorn, games and a magic show). Senior students were treated to a sock hop. This successfully started a weekend of parties, get-togethers and performances. Highlights included a grand ball held

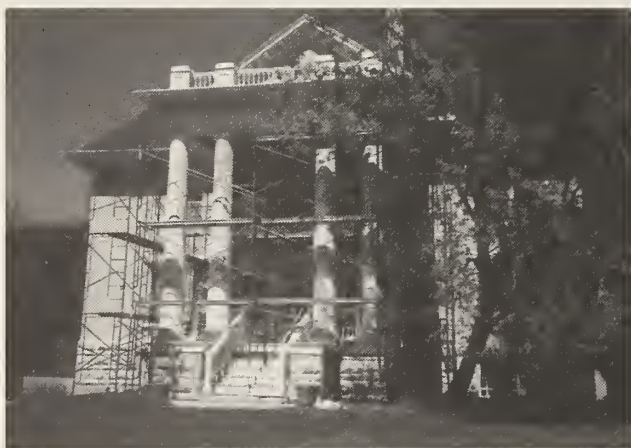
in the Atrium with Mart Kenny (father of former Headmaster Martin Kenny) and his big band providing musical entertainment. Sunday featured an open house, where the community at large was invited to see what was happening at Balmoral Hall School. Two of the many lasting mementos of the weekend were the Friendship Window and the tile wall. The former was dedicated to the students of the school by the Class of 1969. The beautiful stained glass window, "Friendship," was placed in the new Senior Girls' Common Room.<sup>240</sup> The tile wall, located in the Atrium near the main doors of the school, was designed by Art teacher Elizabeth Bonnett and is comprised of tiles hand-crafted by each member of the Student Body, Staff, Board of Governors, Alumnae Board and Parent Association Executive.<sup>241</sup>

Headmaster Porter left the school in January of 1995 for a position in Europe, Diane Bieber, then Head of Junior School, took on the role of Head of School on an interim basis, although the Board ultimately dropped the word 'Acting' from her title. Under her guidance, Balmoral Hall School made several strides towards the adoption of technology





*Tile wall, 1991, BHA*



*Repairs to Aikins House, 2001, BHA*

into the everyday life of the students. The computer rooms, laboratories, greenhouse, theatre and athletic centre all became operational during Mrs. Bieber's term. There was also an increased focus on the social responsibilities of the students.

The fall of 1996 saw the school begin another important phase of its development with the organization of a Heritage Committee, whose task it was to stabilize and restore Aikins House to its former glory. In September 1999, the City of Winnipeg designated the building as an historic building, placing it on the Conservation List as a Grade III structure. Government, foundation and individual donations enabled the school's Heritage



*Atrium, no date, BHA*

Committee to undertake extensive repairs to the home's exterior – including repairs to the brickwork, roof and front and rear porticos – and renovations and restoration of much of the interior – refinishing and reupholstering furniture, refinishing hardwood floors, repairing and restoring art work and general painting and repairs to wood trim.<sup>242</sup>

Mrs. Bieber would remain as Head until her retirement in July 1999, when the present Head of School, Claire Sumerlus, was appointed to the position. Under her leadership, the school has taken technology and made it an educational tool rather than a separate subject. There is internet access in every classroom, all offices and the residence. There has been a renewed focus on the proper method of educating girls and on modernizing the curriculum to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Instruction in English as a Second Language has expanded and priority has been given to ensure graduates are prepared for university, including Advanced Placement courses. The selection of prefects has been given entirely to the student body with no staff involvement.

Volunteerism is an important facet of the education of Balmoral Hall students. The student body has also been encouraged to reach out to the community at



*Mrs. Claire Sumerlus holds a Bachelor of Education from the University of Manitoba and Level 1 School Administrator's Certificate. Her work experience is multi-faceted including teaching from Kindergarten through to Junior High and working in the area of Special Needs. She has also held positions as Librarian, Counsellor, S.T.A.R.S. Program Teacher, Language Arts and Curriculum Implementation Teacher. Prior to coming to Balmoral Hall School, she worked as Vice-Principal and*

*Principal of two Winnipeg schools.*

*Mrs. Sumerlus' involvement in school life has included roles on committees such as a Professional Development Committee; Vision, Goals and School Plan Committee; Effective School Change Committee; Crisis Response Committee; Multi-Cultural Committee; Publicity Committee; and Junior High Liaison Committee. Professionally, she has attended several workshops relating to the field of Special Education, Guidance and Administration.*

*In the community, Mrs. Sumerlus is quite active.*

*In 1991, she was involved in the Winnipeg Affirmative Action Task Force and has facilitated and trained workshops for sexually abused adolescents, as well as on topics such as conflict resolution and parenting. She has been a member of several Jewish community organizations, often chairing their committees. She has been honoured with a Volunteer Recognition Award and co-authored *Accessing Literacy in the Elementary Classroom*.*

large, to accept the responsibility for their neighbours and their neighbourhood. The annual Mulvey School Christmas Party is one example of this commitment to others.

The annual Community Service Day of Giving is another aspect of this volunteerism. Students from Grades VII to Senior 4 spend a day helping out at

community agencies throughout the city, including Gifts for Kids, the Health Science Centre, Winnipeg Humane Society and Agape Table. As Gunwant Sandhu ('99) wrote, "Obviously, this day is important for both the school and our community. Volunteering is all about helping those who are less fortunate than us, aiding children and adults alike who in some cases, are in dire need of aid from others."<sup>243</sup>



# THE NEW MILLENNIUM AND BEYOND

The year 2000 was celebrated as a milestone throughout the world. It was a time to look back at what had been and to look forward to a new century. At Balmoral Hall School, there was much to be proud of, as this book has described, with a rich history of learning and cooperation. But the School also looked forward with great anticipation – the new performing arts, athletic and technology centres ensured that its students would be receiving a well-rounded education of the highest standards.

A partnership with the Women's Television Network in 2001 allowed for numerous students to gain real experience in the day-to-day workings of a television studio. Students participated in the "Girls TV Camp" at the school and worked behind video cameras, in editing and making storyboards. The Camp was open to girls from across the city and won a national award from the Conference Board of Canada for "helping students prepare for high-tech futures."<sup>244</sup>

Another important aspect of school life at Balmoral Hall is the "M.E.R.I.T. Portfolio Program" which stands for "Maximizing Enrichment by Recognizing the Interests and Talents of our students." The program brings together six broad goals to fully prepare students for a successful life after graduation: Academics, Arts, Athletics, Participation in School Life, Personal Management/Leadership and Social Responsibility/Global Awareness. The individual portfolios created reflect the interests, talents and achievements of each student through their work. The Junior School portfolios focus on effort and participation, the Middle School portfolios on integrating special projects into their curriculum and Senior portfolios have a more global focus.<sup>245</sup>

The myriad of developments within the school has paid off in many ways. One of the most significant results was the 2000 Excellence Awards of the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation. Thirty-

nine students from Manitoba won awards (out of a total of 889 across Canada). Two Balmoral Hall students, Sarah Coates and Laura Fletcher, were among only four Manitoba students to receive the prestigious National Excellence Award, giving them scholarship money for up to four years.<sup>246</sup>

The curriculum of the school has also seen significant recent changes, reflecting the needs of the students in the 21st century and the school's ability to provide high-level facilities for a variety of activities – artistic, athletic and academic.<sup>247</sup>

The Junior School Curriculum, Junior Kindergarten, Kindergarten and Grades I to V, includes all the basic subjects as well as music/choir, drama and speaking/listening. Use of technology, especially computers, is integrated into all subjects. The students begin the day with a 15-minute homeroom period followed by two 40-minute periods and then morning recess. Two more 40-minute periods complete the morning and run into the one-hour lunch/recreation time. The afternoon consists of three periods.

*"Creating an environment where each child feels valued, secure and willing to take risks, Junior School offers a balanced combination of academic core subjects, co-curricular choices and extra curricular activities."*<sup>248</sup>

The school continues a tradition as a leader in offering the latest educational advancements to its students by embarking on a four-year program for accreditation to deliver Manitoba's first IBPYP (International Baccalaureate Years Program). Balmoral Hall now provides an international education from Junior Kindergarten to grade XII.

Middle School, Grades VI to VIII, include courses in Social Studies (Grade VI), World Geography (Grade VII), Ancient Civilizations (Grade VIII), debating/public speaking, a laptop program (Grade VIII) and an extensive arts courses (visual,



*Monday morning assembly, 1999, BHA*



*The cast of the 2000 production "Charlie Brown", BHA*

performing and band). After a 15-minute homeroom advisory period, the students attend eight 40-minute classes, some of which are doubled to allow for more in-depth learning.

*"At the heart of our Grade 6, 7 and 8 curriculum lies a strong commitment to challenge all students appropriately at their academic level."*<sup>249</sup>

Senior School, Grades IX to XII, entails the earning of the 28 credits required to obtain a Manitoba high school graduation diploma. Along with the numerous required courses, senior students can choose from a number of optional classes such as: Technical TV, Japanese, Studio Art, Spanish, CAD (Computer Aided Design- Architecture/Drafting), World Issues, Computer Science, Psychology and MultiMedia.

*"Our students come from all over the world and inspire Balmoral Hall with a global perspective. Students have*



*the opportunity to learn new languages, to express their ideas creatively through the visual arts and performing arts (music, theatre, drama, dance) and to develop a healthy lifestyle through our athletic program”<sup>250</sup>*

Tuition fees for students attending in the 2002-2003 school year begin at \$7,107 for a full day Kindergarten day student and increase to \$9,654 for Senior School day students. Residents pay \$22,737 per school year (full time boarding and tuition) with non-Manitoba residents adding \$3,000.<sup>251</sup>

And what of the future? The school, as we have read, has a unique history. If there had been one constant in this story, it has been the ability of the school, its heads, staff, alumnae, parent associations and students to evolve and change with the times. This has allowed Balmoral Hall School to weather the difficult times. The School has always maintained high standards, especially crucial in the last decade when all were asked to support the modernization of the facilities to reflect a similar modernization of its curriculum.

Balmoral Hall School will continue to be an important part of Winnipeg, as it has for the past 100 years. It will continue to strive for excellence, to produce some of Canada’s most talented and learned



*Grandparents' Day, BHA*

graduates and to prepare them to meet all the challenges in the ever-changing world around them.



*The crests of founding schools — Rupert's Land (top left), Riverbend (top right) and Balmoral Hall (bottom), BHA*



# ALUMNAE MEMORIES

I started at Rupert's Land in, I suppose, the fall of 1941. My memories of Rupert's Land are so happy. I loved the school – the camaraderie, the activity, yes even the work. I loved my green uniform! Though not the heavy brown stockings we wore all winter which were eternally needing hitching up, the thigh-strangling garters never entirely doing their job. I remember the playground – mostly as viewed from upside down, as we were always practising handstands and endlessly formed ourselves into pyramids and what we called gymnastic shapes. There were only about 15 girls in my class, all such warm friendly girls. I think we had Assembly and prayers before school every day, but when the Hymn was "For those in Peril on the Sea," I could hardly bear to think about the situation let alone sing about those in such danger from the deadly U-boats.

In the middle of May 1944, we suddenly got word that the "Mauretania" – the former liner, now a troopship – was going to be allowed to take civilians back to the U.K., provided they could get to New York within, I think, five days. What a whirl of activity ensued! Farewells all round. Good-bye to so many friends and possessions...but we made it.

As a postscript I should like to add a curious story. On completing my University studies I married a British engineer, at that point briefly working in Calgary. Christmas 1954 we spent with doctor cousins in Edmonton. On the last evening of our visit we went to a party given by a work colleague of my cousin, whose wife he did not know. The door was opened by Donna Armstrong, who had been in my small class at Rupert's Land. We fell into each others arms with cries of mutual astonishment!

Rupert's Land School War guest Claire (Moore)  
Biggart, (1941-44)

For a time all went well, until in October all schools, theatres and churches were closed by order of the Health Department as a safeguard against Spanish Influenza, which seemed to be epidemic all over the world in 1918. During the seven weeks the boarders did lessons, took walks, published a Flutime daily paper, and by work, play and cheerfulness managed to keep the enemy at bay. Kathleen Campbell was the only sufferer and her case was very slight. The Flu ban against all public gatherings prevented any civic or school celebration of Armistice Day, but all hearts shared the universal gladness when at eleven o'clock on the eleventh day of the eleventh month the guns ceased firing and the world had rest.

"Havergal Chronicle"

Classes at Rupert's Land did not begin right after Labour Day, so Mother and I had lots of time to go to the 5th floor children's department of Eaton's Department Store on Portage Avenue to get me outfitted. The regulation tunic was much like the one I had worn to public school, except it was green instead of navy blue, and the blouse was similar to the public school blouse, except it was beige instead of white. The silly green tam was another matter. Eaton's didn't have the regulation blazer in stock, but we bought one that seemed similar. The material it was made of seemed a bit unsubstantial, but it was green, and it was decorated with handsome gold braid.

I had unilaterally decided that I would wear my beloved penny loafers (they were brown after all), with my uniform, that I would wear lipstick as usual, and that I would never wear my green tam which fitted so uncomfortably on my thick, curly, long mane of hair. I was soon informed, however, that there could be, and would be, no exceptions to the

rules of dress at Rupert's Land. Tams and brown oxfords were totem, penny loafers and make-up of any kind, strictly taboo. Not only that, the gold braid on my blazer was a social faux pas; only prefects and their betters wore gold braid. Perhaps what shocked me most was that deviations were noticed! At public school, one had been able to blend smoothly into the background if one so desired; here there seemed to be constant surveillance. I had never even heard of house captains and prefects before, but here they seemed to be everywhere. Like Santa Claus, they knew when you'd been naughty or nice, and if it was naughty, they had the power to hand you a detention. I was astonished!

Elaine (Tempest) Williams RLS 49

We had to wear a plain coat, green beret (tam) and brown leather gloves. It was very hard to take care of brown leather gloves, so they were often in our pockets, or lost, and one day someone phoned the school to say that they had seen a Rupert's Land girl on the streetcar with no gloves! Can you guess how our berets were cleaned? They had to be washed by hand and while they were wet, a large dinner plate was pushed inside them to stretch them and to give them a good crease. I can remember my beret, propped up on the pantry shelf, drying.

My headmistress was Miss Gladys Millard. She was not very tall but she was very firm indeed and if you were called to her office (we called it her sitting room) you knocked on the door and curtsied to her as soon as you were inside the room.

Barbara (Hamon) Aldous RL38

Miss Carter, our wonderful headmistress, mentor, and Latin teacher – the very best. If she dropped her voice and roared everyone froze. Our respect for her demanded instant obedience and undying love.

I remember stopping at Reid's or Brown's (usually the former) Drugstore soda fountains after school for cherry cokes or chocolate milkshakes and BOYS, usually from Kelvin. In Grade 10, we snuck off to the Intra High Field Day at Osborne Stadium in spite of strict rules not to. The next day we all stood like statues in the hall of the White House as Miss Carter lectured us and handed out punishment.

Daphne (White) Lindsay RB50

The greatest influence on me was Sylvia Turner, form mistress, teacher of History and English, organizer of the literary and debating societies. She was an inspired teacher, an animator, an enhancer, teaching us to use our minds and encouraging us to explore, sharing her appreciation and interest. She taught us first the basics: to think logically and to express ourselves clearly. I remember in composition classes in Grade X being asked to write a letter booking a holiday, and on another occasion to write a book review. The only piece of her practical training I never found a use for, not being a politician nor having to endure difficult TV interviews, was to be able to stand up and speak for ten minutes saying nothing. She also taught us to use imagination. I remember Grade XII as a year of growth and exciting discoveries.

Anne Duffin, Rupert's Land School war guest, 1940-44



# ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> T. Friesen, in conversation with the author, November 9, 2001.
- <sup>2</sup> Quoted in Winnipeg Free Press, September 14, 1953, p. 21.
- <sup>3</sup> Winnipeg Free Press, January 16, 1965, p. 21.
- <sup>4</sup> R.R. Rostecki and J.A. Ritchie, St. Mary's Academy, Winnipeg (Winnipeg: St. Mary's Academy, 1994), p. 2.
- <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3.
- <sup>6</sup> Sylvia Van Kirk, "Many Tender Ties," Women in Fur-Trade Society, 1670-1870 (Winnipeg: Watson & Dwyer Publishing, Inc., 1980), p. 147.
- <sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 147-148.
- <sup>8</sup> Manitoba Free Press, May 10, 1930, p. 37.
- <sup>9</sup> K.M. Abel, "Background Report: St. John's Cathedral Site in the Nineteenth Century," report for the Manitoba Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation, Historic Resources Branch, May 1985, pp. 6-13.
- <sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13; S. Van Kirk, op. cit., pp. 149-151; and Winnipeg Free Press, March 3, 1928, p. 9.
- <sup>11</sup> R.R. Rostecki and J.A. Ritchie, op. cit., pp. 2-4. By 1860, the Nuns were operating convent schools for girls in St. Boniface, St. François-Xavier, St. Norbert, St. Vital, Lac Sainte-Anne and Ile-à-la-Croix.
- <sup>12</sup> K.M. Abel, op. cit., pp. 15-19.
- <sup>13</sup> N. Bingham, A Study of the Church Buildings in Manitoba of the Congregational, Methodist, Presbyterian and United Churches of Canada (Winnipeg: Manitoba Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation, Historic Resources Branch, 1987), pp. 8-11; and K. Crossman, A Study of Anglican Church Buildings in Manitoba (Winnipeg: Manitoba Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation, Historic Resources Branch, 1989), pp. 9-14.
- <sup>14</sup> R.R. Rostecki and J.A. Ritchie, op. cit., pp. 4-7.
- <sup>15</sup> Manitoba Daily Free Press, May 31, 1877, p. 3 and June 4, 1877, p. 3; and Manitoba Free Press, September 2, 1910, p. 15.
- <sup>16</sup> Manitoba Free Press, September 2, 1910, p. 15.
- <sup>17</sup> This lack of expertise of local contractors was an ongoing problem and dozens of early brick and stone structures in the area suffered because of it. Builders were dealing with the unique circumstances of the soil and the weather and it took many years to develop the skills necessary to build properly in Winnipeg.
- <sup>18</sup> Manitoba Free Press, September 2, 1910, p. 15.
- <sup>19</sup> Manitoba Free Press, September 2, 1910, p. 15 and September 4, 1901, p. 3. Part of the property was sold to make room for a new children's hospital and the school was demolished in September 1910.
- <sup>20</sup> C. Gossage, A Question of Privilege (Toronto: Peter Martin Associates Limited, 1977), pp. 153-155.
- <sup>21</sup> Manitoba Daily Free Press, December 30, 1882, p. 2.
- <sup>22</sup> Winnipeg Tribune, December 31, 1952, p. 11.
- <sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11; and Winnipeg Free Press, July 29, 1967, Leisure Magazine, p. 18.
- <sup>24</sup> Note that this centennial history book follows the common practice of the early and mid-20<sup>th</sup> century of using the terms "headmistress" and "principal" interchangeably. This practice continued into the 1970s. An example comes from the Association of Headmistresses of Canada, which changed its name to the Canadian Association of Principals of Independent Schools for Girls in 1971 but still referred to themselves as "Headmistresses" in the Association constitution.
- <sup>25</sup> Miss M.J. Dalton's remembrances of Havergal College, Winnipeg, written ca.1950, courtesy of the Balmoral Hall School Archives (below as BHA).
- <sup>26</sup> Town Topics, Vol. VI, No. 4 (July 27, 1901), p. 7; and N. Thomas Russell, Strength of Choice. A History of the Canadian Association of Independent Schools (Toronto: CAIS, 1993), p. 31.
- <sup>27</sup> Interviews with Mrs. Guy Clarkson (Ruth McMartin) and Mrs. J.G.C. Hall (Frances Code), ca.1950, BHA.
- <sup>28</sup> Town Topics, Vol. VI, No. 4 (July 27, 1901), p. 7; C. Gossage, op. cit., p. 268; Winnipeg Tribune, May 6, 1933, Magazine Section, p. 5; and Miss M.J. Dalton's remembrances of Havergal College, Winnipeg, written ca.1950, BHA.
- <sup>29</sup> Havergal College, Winnipeg, 1902, pp. 8-9.
- <sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.
- <sup>31</sup> Principal Dalton, 1902 Report, in *ibid.*, p. 16.
- <sup>32</sup> Miss M.J. Dalton's remembrances of Havergal College, Winnipeg, written ca.1950, BHA.
- <sup>33</sup> Description in first "Havergal College Magazine," handwritten publication of the College, Fall 1902, Provincial Archives of Manitoba (below as PAM), P4049, Folder 2.
- <sup>34</sup> Miss M.J. Dalton's remembrances of Havergal College, Winnipeg, written ca.1950, BHA.
- <sup>35</sup> "Distribution of Prize Programme, 1906," BHA.
- <sup>36</sup> Winnipeg Tribune, May 6, 1933, Magazine Section, p. 5.
- <sup>37</sup> The shareholders of the school gave Miss Dalton a certificate and other gifts as thanks for her efforts. PAM, P4047, Folder 2.
- <sup>38</sup> Manitoba Free Press, June 9, 1928, p. 4; and Winnipeg Tribune, June 9, 1928, p. 2.
- <sup>39</sup> Interviews with Mrs. Guy Clarkson (Ruth McMartin) and Mrs. J.G.C. Hall (Frances Code), ca.1950, BHA.
- <sup>40</sup> Scrapbook, BHA.
- <sup>41</sup> Information courtesy of website "www.girlguides.ca."
- <sup>42</sup> Lillian B. Thomas, "Some Manitoba Women who did First

Things," in Papers read before the Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba, Series III, No. 4 (1947-48), p. 25.

<sup>43</sup> Quoted in Winnipeg Tribune, June 25, 1907.

<sup>44</sup> City of Winnipeg Building Permit, #1618/1909, courtesy of the City of Winnipeg Archives (below as CWA).

<sup>45</sup> "Architect's Plans, #1618/1909," CWA.

<sup>46</sup> Havergal College Magazine, 1909-10, p. 14, BHA.

<sup>47</sup> L. Gibbons, Stories Houses Tell (Winnipeg: Hyperion Press, 1978), p. 106.

<sup>48</sup> Havergal College Magazine, 1914-15, p. 74, BHA.

<sup>49</sup> "In the Matter of Change of Name of Havergal Ladies College," documents courtesy of the Provincial Government, Companies Branch.

<sup>50</sup> Rupert's Land Ladies College Prospectus, 1915, p. 7.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 7-10.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.

<sup>53</sup> Incorporation papers and documents courtesy of the Provincial Government, Companies Branch.

<sup>54</sup> Rupert's Land Ladies' College Prospectus, 1924, p. 2.

<sup>55</sup> Rupert's Land Ladies' College Prospectus (ca.1940), p. 7.

<sup>56</sup> Rupert's Land Ladies' College Prospectus, 1924, p. 3.

<sup>57</sup> "Minutes of the Ladies Executive Board of Rupert's Land Ladies' College," PAM, P4046, Folder 4 (below as "Minutes, LEB"), February 9, 1927.

<sup>58</sup> "Minutes, LEB," January 12, 1927.

<sup>59</sup> "Minutes, LEB," March 9, 1927.

<sup>60</sup> "Minutes, LEB," May 3, 1927.

<sup>61</sup> "Minutes, LEB," May 9, 1927. This meeting also decided that berets were to be worn as part of the outdoor uniforms.

<sup>62</sup> Manitoba Free Press, June 9, 1928, p. 4; and Winnipeg Tribune, June 9, 1928, p. 2.

<sup>63</sup> "Minutes, LEB," July 8, 1928.

<sup>64</sup> "Minutes, LEB," May 9, 1928, June 13, 1928, June 19, 1928, July 9, 1928.

<sup>65</sup> "Minutes, LEB," June 13, 1928 and joint meeting of the LEB and Men's Advisory Board, October 8, 1928. The LEB passed a motion limiting the salary of the new headmistress to \$2,500 per annum.

<sup>66</sup> "Minutes, LEB," October 11, 1928; and Rupert's Land Ladies' College Prospectus (ca.1930), p. 7.

<sup>67</sup> Joint meeting of the LEB and Men's Advisory Board, September 29, 1929; and "Minutes, LEB," November 9, 1929.

<sup>68</sup> "Minutes, LEB," April 10, 1929.

<sup>69</sup> Winnipeg Telegram, May 14, 1929.

<sup>70</sup> "History of Riverbend School," anonymous report in PAM, P4050, Folder 1. Below as "Anonymous History."

<sup>71</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> F. Bowles, "Manitoba's Government House," Special Supplement to The Transactions of the Historical and

Scientific Society of Manitoba, Series 111, No. 25 (1969-70), p. 9; G.M. Rose, A Cyclopædia of Canadian Biography (Toronto: Rose Publishing Company, 1888); J.C. Dent, The Canadian Portrait Gallery (Toronto: J.B. Magurn, 1881), pp. 191-92; and N.F. Davin, The Irishman in Canada (Toronto: Maclear and Company, ca.1877). J.C. Aikins was appointed Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba and Keewatin (1882-88) and then the Senate in 1896. He was the first Lieutenant Governor to occupy the present Government House.

<sup>73</sup> "Aikins, J.A.M.," BHA file.

<sup>74</sup> Pioneers and Prominent People of Manitoba (Winnipeg: Canadian Publicity Company, ca.1925), p. 77.

<sup>75</sup> J.M. Bumsted, Dictionary of Manitoba Biography (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1999), p. 4. Older brother John Somerset Aikins (1850-1911) came west in 1875 and settled in Winnipeg in 1879. He represented Rockwood in the provincial legislature and was co-founder of the Aikins and Montgomery, real estate company.

<sup>76</sup> Quoted from the speech written by Sir J.A.M. Aikins for the celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup>, anniversary of his call to the Bar, February 25, 1929.

<sup>77</sup> Winnipeg Tribune, March 2, 1929, pp. 1, 8.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>79</sup> "Aikins, J.A.M.," BHA file; and D. and L. Gibson, Substantial Justice (Winnipeg: Peguis Publishers, ca.1972), pp. 157-58.

<sup>80</sup> Winnipeg Tribune, March 2, 1929, p. 1.

<sup>81</sup> Saturday Night, August 26, 1916, and R.R. Rostecki, "515 Portage Avenue — Wesley College (University of Winnipeg)", report of the City of Winnipeg Historical Buildings Committee, October 1997, p. 4.

<sup>82</sup> "Aikins, J.A.M.," BHA file.

<sup>83</sup> City of Winnipeg Building Permit #330/1901, dated June 22, 1901, CWA. The building was estimated to have cost \$14,000 and measured 55 x 42 x 45 feet. The local firm of Davidson Brothers was the contractor.

<sup>84</sup> Aikins (Somerset) Family Record Form, BHA.

<sup>85</sup> Ditte (Lansky) Cloutier (Balmoral Hall — 1966), in conversation with the author, December 11, 2001.

<sup>86</sup> "Aikins, J.A.M.," BHA file; Manitoba Free Press, July 29, 1916, p. 1; and Winnipeg Tribune, October 23, 1926, p. 1.

<sup>87</sup> Winnipeg Tribune, March 1, 1929, p. 8.

<sup>88</sup> Winnipeg Tribune, March 2, 1929, p. 1; and Winnipeg Free Press, March 4, 1929, p. 1.

<sup>89</sup> Contained in Letters of Congratulation presented to Hon. Sir James Aikins, K.C. (Winnipeg: 1929) in "Aikins, Sir J.A.M.," Biographical Vertical File, Manitoba Legislative Library.

<sup>90</sup> D. and L. Gibson, *op. cit.*, pp. 255-56. The year 1929 saw the deaths of three of Manitoba's leading pioneers of the legal profession: Aikins (died March 1), Sir Hugh John Macdonald (practicing law in Manitoba from 1882 and the only surviving son of Sir John A. Macdonald, who died on March 29), and Isaac Campbell (47 years at the Manitoba Bar, he died in August).



- <sup>91</sup> Winnipeg Free Press, March 5, 1929, p. 4.
- <sup>92</sup> "Last Will and Testament of the Honorable Sir James Albert Manning Aikins," dated January 6, 1928, courtesy of the Manitoba Government, Probate Division. The Will also stipulated donations "in trust" of \$20,000 to the Boy Scouts Association of Canada, \$10,000 to the Girl Guides, \$30,000 to the home missions of the United Church, \$25,000 to the Young Men's Christian Association of Winnipeg. Direct donations included \$5,000 each to the Children's Home of Winnipeg, the Children's Hospital of Winnipeg, the Canadian Bible Society and Wesley College.
- <sup>93</sup> Winnipeg Free Press, May 3, 1954. p. 1 and October 7, 1954, p. 1. Aikins home at 218 Roslyn Road was bequeathed to the Winnipeg Art Gallery Association as part of the \$1.2-million estate.
- <sup>94</sup> Correspondence found at PAM, P4050, Folder 1 and P4051, Folders 1-3.
- <sup>95</sup> "Anonymous History."
- <sup>96</sup> Loc. cit.; and biographical information from J.M. Bumsted, op. cit., pp. 200, 208; Winnipeg Tribune, June 9, 1933, p. 3; and Winnipeg Free Press, May 17, 1938, p. 9.
- <sup>97</sup> Letters/telegrams from G.H. Aikins to Mrs. F.J. Ney, July-August, 1929, PAM, P4050, Folder 1.
- <sup>98</sup> From "Memorandum re Riverbend School," dated April 3, 1950, PAM, P4050, Folder 1, below as "Memorandum, 1950." This unsigned memorandum outlines, in detail, the financial history of Riverbend School from 1929-1950.
- <sup>99</sup> Loc. cit.
- <sup>100</sup> Riverbend School Prospectus, 1944, n.p.; and Records of the Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Conference of Manitoba of the United Church of Canada, 1930, courtesy of the United Church Archives, Winnipeg.
- <sup>101</sup> Mary Kinnear, Margaret McWilliams. An Interwar Feminist (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991), pp. 3-4, 22, 32.
- <sup>102</sup> Ibid., pp. 3, 4, 46.
- <sup>103</sup> Ibid., p. 155.
- <sup>104</sup> Telegram from G.H. Aikins to Mrs. R.F. McWilliams, September 18, 1929 at the PAM, P4050, Folder 1.
- <sup>105</sup> Telegrams between G.H. Aikins and Mrs. R.F. McWilliams, September 20 and 21, 1929 and October 5, 1929, loc. cit.
- <sup>106</sup> Winnipeg Tribune and Winnipeg Free Press, June 22, 1929.
- <sup>107</sup> Winnipeg Free Press, July 6, 1929; Riverbend Bulletin, September 1938 and September 1941.
- <sup>108</sup> Winnipeg Free Press, July 6, 1929.
- <sup>109</sup> Joint meeting of the LEB and Men's Advisory Board, June 16, 1931.
- <sup>110</sup> "LEB Minutes," February 12 and March 19, 1930.
- <sup>111</sup> Rupert's Land Ladies' College Prospectus, ca. 1930, p. 7.
- <sup>112</sup> "LEB Minutes," February 8, March 15 and April 18, 1932 and joint meeting with Men's Advisory Board, June 24, 1932.
- House owner, Mr. Rattray, raised the monthly rent to \$125 in April.
- <sup>113</sup> "LEB Minutes," joint meeting with Men's Advisory Board, October 20, 1932, February 16 and June 20, 1933, November 19, 1936, and January 28, 1937. The Ladies' School Endowment Fund sat at \$21,000, the Eva L. Jones Memorial Fund totalled \$3,812.
- <sup>114</sup> "LEB Minutes," April 18, 1932.
- <sup>115</sup> Rupert's Land College Magazine, Vol. III, No. 1 (June 1931), p. 30.
- <sup>116</sup> "LEB Minutes," March 15, 1933.
- <sup>117</sup> "LEB Minutes," June 14, 1933.
- <sup>118</sup> Cited in "LEB Minutes," March 29, 1934.
- <sup>119</sup> Loc. cit.
- <sup>120</sup> "LEB Minutes," June 6, 1934.
- <sup>121</sup> "LEB Minutes," November 21, 1934 and June 15, 1935.
- <sup>122</sup> "LEB Minutes," February 13, 1936 and joint meeting with Men's Advisory Board, January 28, 1937. At the latter meeting, it was decided that Rupert's Land should be known as "School" rather than "College."
- <sup>123</sup> "LEB Minutes," February 13, 1936.
- <sup>124</sup> "LEB Minutes," March 19, 1936 and April 23, 1936.
- <sup>125</sup> "LEB Minutes," October 15, 1936.
- <sup>126</sup> "Men's Advisory Board Minutes," February 9, 1937.
- <sup>127</sup> "Special Board Meeting," April 12, 1937.
- <sup>128</sup> Letter dated October 1, 1938 in P4047, Folder 4, PAM.
- <sup>129</sup> The Eagle, Vol. 8 (June 1940), p. 16.
- <sup>130</sup> Rupert's Land Ladies' College Prospectus, ca. 1940.
- <sup>131</sup> Letter dated October 4, 1943 in P4047, Folder 3, PAM.
- <sup>132</sup> Winnipeg Free Press and Winnipeg Tribune, October 23, 1945.
- <sup>133</sup> Rupert's Land Alumnae Newsletter, 1946, BHA.
- <sup>134</sup> Scrapbook, BHA.
- <sup>135</sup> City of Winnipeg Architect's Plans, #2564/1930, CWA; and L. Stephen in The Portal, Vol. 2, No. 1 (Spring/Summer 1989), p. 19. The site also included a large garage/stable between the two houses and a small summer house near the riverbank.
- <sup>136</sup> City of Winnipeg Building Permit, #2564/1930, dated July 9, 1930, CWA.
- <sup>137</sup> City of Winnipeg Architect's Plans, #2564/1930, CWA.
- <sup>138</sup> "Memorandum, 1950." The building was paid for by means of a loan made by the United Church from the endowment fund. During construction, additional furniture and equipment, valued at \$25,000, was donated to the school.
- <sup>139</sup> Riverbend School Prospectus, 1944, n.p.
- <sup>140</sup> Vox Fluminis, 1931.
- <sup>141</sup> Winnipeg Tribune, August 13, 1932.
- <sup>142</sup> "LEB Minutes," June 8, 1931.
- <sup>143</sup> Vox Fluminis, 1934, p. 5 and 1945, p. 4.

- <sup>144</sup> Vox Fluminis, 1935, p. 35.
- <sup>145</sup> Winnipeg Free Press, February 23, 1935.
- <sup>146</sup> Undated article in Winnipeg Free Press, November 1935, BHA Scrapbooks.
- <sup>147</sup> Winnipeg Free Press, February 2, 1935.
- <sup>148</sup> The Bulletin, April 1941.
- <sup>149</sup> The Bulletin, (Riverbend newsletter begun in May 1937), May 1937.
- <sup>150</sup> The Bulletin, June 1, 1937.
- <sup>151</sup> The Bulletin, September 25, 1937.
- <sup>152</sup> The Bulletin, February 1938 and Easter 1939.
- <sup>153</sup> The Bulletin, June 1938.
- <sup>154</sup> The Bulletin, September 1941 and September 1944.
- <sup>155</sup> The Bulletin, September 1946.
- <sup>156</sup> The Bulletin, February 1942, December 1942, and March 1943.
- <sup>157</sup> The Bulletin, December 1941; BHA Scrapbook, 1939-1942.
- <sup>158</sup> The Bulletin, November 1945.
- <sup>159</sup> BHA Scrapbooks, 1942-47. Aikins was replaced by C. Gordon Smith of the Canadian Wheat Board.
- <sup>160</sup> "Memorandum, 1950."
- <sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>164</sup> Balmoral Hall Briefs, Vol. 7, No. 1 (January 1961); Winnipeg Tribune, December 31, 1952, p. 11 and Winnipeg Free Press, August 12, 1952, p. 13. Rupert's Land College remained vacant until 1952 when it was occupied by the Royal Canadian Air Force Auxiliary. It was finally demolished in 1964. The 1902 cornerstone for south wing was pried out and saved prior to the demolition. It was reused at Balmoral Hall in one of the pillars built as part of new main entrance completed in 1991.
- <sup>165</sup> Report presented by Principal J.M. Carter to the 26th Annual Manitoba United Church Conference (1950) in "Records of the Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Conference of Manitoba of the United Church of Canada," courtesy of the United Church Archives, Winnipeg.
- <sup>166</sup> "Memorandum, 1950."
- <sup>167</sup> Winnipeg Free Press, June 16, 1950.
- <sup>168</sup> Winnipeg Free Press, September 1, 1950.
- <sup>169</sup> Letter from the joint chairmen of the new school to parents, dated June 8, 1950, BHA.
- <sup>170</sup> E.D. Burrows in The Portal, Vol. 2, No. 1 (Spring/Summer 1989), pp. 16-17. One of the more unfortunate aspects of the school during this period was the use of the 'Diet Table' "designated for those boarders deemed by Miss Gwen Murrell-Wright to qualify. Meticulous about detail, Miss Murrell-Wright insisted on a 'weigh-in' every Sunday night. The scales were strategically placed outside her suite."
- <sup>171</sup> Winnipeg Tribune, June 22, 1950.
- <sup>172</sup> Balmoral Hall Yearbook, 1951, p. 11; and The Portal, Vol. 3, No. 1 (Fall 1991), p. 5. Over the year, mascots were added to the Houses — Kermit, Big Bird, Pooh Bear and Bernadette the hippopotamus.
- <sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.
- <sup>174</sup> "Fee Schedule, 1950," BHA; and "Fee Schedule, 1951," BHA.
- <sup>175</sup> The Portal, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Fall/Winter 1988/89), p. 13 and Vol. 2, No. 1 (Spring/Summer 1989), pp. 22-23; and D. Cloutier, in conversation with the author, December 11, 2001.
- <sup>176</sup> Scrapbook, BHA (November 1955); and Winnipeg Tribune, December 21, 1955.
- <sup>177</sup> Scrapbook, BHA (November 1956).
- <sup>178</sup> Winnipeg Free Press, June 12, 1958.
- <sup>179</sup> Balmoral Hall Yearbook, 1958, p. 32.
- <sup>180</sup> Balmoral Hall Yearbook, 1959, p. 7.
- <sup>181</sup> Optima Anni, 1961, p. 5; Scrapbook, BHA (September 1961); and Balmoral Hall Briefs, Vol. 8, No. 1 (November 1961).
- <sup>182</sup> The Portal, Vol. 2, No. 1 (Spring/Summer 1989), p. 17. Students of the day remember the excitement of being allowed to use crayons on the walls of the Red House prior to its demolition.
- <sup>183</sup> Scrapbook, BHA (September 1961).
- <sup>184</sup> Balmoral Hall Briefs, Vol. 8, No. 1 (November 1961).
- <sup>185</sup> Optima Anni, 1961, p. 3. A contest was held for students to name the yearbook in December 1960 and Betty Nichol's suggestion won.
- <sup>186</sup> Optima Anni, 1965, p. 21.
- <sup>187</sup> Thanks to L. Stephen and J. McDonald for information on uniforms.
- <sup>188</sup> The Eagle, Vol. III, (June 1931), p. 38.
- <sup>189</sup> F. Gowan, student, in The Eagle, Vol. III, (June 1931), pp. 38-9.
- <sup>190</sup> Phyllis Beatty, Grade XII student, Vox Fluminis, 1945, p. 24.
- <sup>191</sup> The Bulletin, March 1938.
- <sup>192</sup> *Loc. cit.*; and Vox Fluminis, 1945, p. 4.
- <sup>193</sup> The Bulletin, February 1942.
- <sup>194</sup> Winnipeg Free Press, September 1, 1950.
- <sup>195</sup> Letter from Miss Murrell-Wright to parents dated August 25, 1950, PAM, P4047, Folder 3.
- <sup>196</sup> In fact, during the 1950s, all students wore white dresses to the closing exercises.
- <sup>197</sup> Balmoral Hall Briefs, Vol. 7, No. 1 (Jan 1961).
- <sup>198</sup> T. Friesen, in conversation with the author, November 8, 2001.
- <sup>199</sup> *Ibid.* Since 1999, mortarboards have also become part of the graduation uniform.
- <sup>200</sup> N. Thomas Russell, *op. cit.*, p. 90.
- <sup>201</sup> Winnipeg Tribune, June 11, 1965.
- <sup>202</sup> Balmoral Hall Newsletter, Vol. 13, No. 1 (June 1967).



<sup>203</sup> Alumnae Newsletter, March 1966, p. 5.

<sup>204</sup> Optima Anni, 1972, n.p.

<sup>205</sup> Balmoral Hall Newsletter, Vol. 14, No. 1 (December 1968).

<sup>206</sup> C. Gossage, op. cit., p. 271.

<sup>207</sup> Optima Anni, 1971, n.p.

<sup>208</sup> Winnipeg Tribune, May 25, 1968.

<sup>209</sup> Optima Anni, 1968, n.p.

<sup>210</sup> Winnipeg Tribune, September 13, 1969.

<sup>211</sup> Optima Anni, 1971, n.p.

<sup>212</sup> Optima Anni, 1972, n.p.

<sup>213</sup> Balmoral Hall Newsletter, June 1972, p. 1.

<sup>214</sup> Optima Anni, 1973, n.p.

<sup>215</sup> Ditte Cloutier, in conversation with the author, December 11, 2001.

<sup>216</sup> Optima Anni, 1973, n.p.

<sup>217</sup> T. Friesen, in conversation with the author, November 9, 2001.

<sup>218</sup> C. Gossage, op. cit., p. 271

<sup>219</sup> Jason Kenney is the Canadian Alliance Member of Parliament for Calgary Southeast and Chief Critic for Finance.

<sup>220</sup> R. Martin Kenney, in conversation with the author, November 1, 2001.

<sup>221</sup> Optima Anni, 1979, n.p.

<sup>222</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>223</sup> Letter from the Headmaster of one of Ontario's prestigious schools to Mr. Russell, courtesy of N.T. Russell.

<sup>224</sup> Meliora Petens, Spring 1985, p. 1.

<sup>225</sup> Information supplied by Ted Staunton, November 2001.

<sup>226</sup> Meliora Petens, Winter 1987-88, p. 1.

<sup>227</sup> The Portal, Vol. 7, No. 1 (Fall 1995), p. 10.

<sup>228</sup> Headmaster T. Staunton, The Portal, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Fall/Winter 1988/89), p. 13; and D. Cloutier, in conversation with the author, December 11, 2001. This was not the first

relationship with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. When the company was first organized in 1970, they used the Junior School gymnasium as its practice hall. Later, when the company's residential facilities were sold, Balmoral Hall offered them space in the school's residence as a temporary solution.

<sup>229</sup> The Portal, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Spring 1988), p. 5.

<sup>230</sup> Headmaster T. Staunton, The Portal, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Fall/Winter 1988/89), p. 14.

<sup>231</sup> The Portal, Vol. 3, No. 1 (Fall 1991), p. 21.

<sup>232</sup> The Portal, Vol. 4, No. 1 (Fall 1992), p. 3.

<sup>233</sup> The Portal, Vol. 9, No. 1 (Summer 1997), p. 5.

<sup>234</sup> Optima Anni, 1999, p. 7.

<sup>235</sup> Information courtesy of Linda Martin.

<sup>236</sup> The Portal, Vol. 3, No. 1 (Fall 1991), p. 10.

<sup>237</sup> The Portal, Vol. 11, No. 1 (Winter 1998-99), p. 1.

<sup>238</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>239</sup> The Portal, Vol. 6, No. 3 (Winter 1995), p. 19.

<sup>240</sup> The Portal, Vol. 4, No. 1 (Fall 1992), pp. 7-11.

<sup>241</sup> BHA

<sup>242</sup> The Portal, Spring 2000, p. 3, Vol. 12, No. 2 (Fall 2000), p. 24 and Vol. 13, No. 2 (Fall 2001), p. 11

<sup>243</sup> The Portal, Vol. 11, No. 1 (Winter 1998/99), p. 24.

<sup>244</sup> The Metro, April 25, 2001.

<sup>245</sup> The Portal, Vol. 12, No. 2 (Fall 2000), p. 1.

<sup>246</sup> BHA.

<sup>247</sup> Balmoral Hall Prospectus, 2002-2003, pp. 2-5.

<sup>248</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>249</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>250</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7





# Educate Encourage Empower

Balmoral Hall, a leading, contemporary all-girls school, is committed to a tradition of academic excellence. We educate, encourage and empower our girls and young women to achieve their personal best.



**BALMORAL HALL SCHOOL**

Founded in 1901

630 Westminster Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3C 3S1

*Meliora Petens ~ Seeking Better Things*